DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 384 761 CE 069 411

AUTHOR MacAllum, Keith; Ma, Patricia
TITLE Skills, Standards and Entry-Level Work. Elements of a Strategy for Youth Employability Development. Research and Evaluation Report Series.
INSTITUTION Employment and Training Administration (DOL), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 107p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Disadvantaged Youth; Economic Development; Educational Needs; *Education Work Relationship; Employer Attitudes; Employment Potential; Entry Workers; *Job Skills; *Policy Formation; *Public Policy; Secondary Education; Work Experience; *Work Experience Programs; *Youth Employment

ABSTRACT

Can public policy devise effective strategies that seek to capitalize on the educational and developmental potential of private-sector entry-level jobs? What is the feasibility of using the secondary labor market in a formal way to promote skill development in youth? Can youth develop useful and transferable skills in these jobs? How can these skills be assessed, documented, and certified? To determine the answers to these policy questions, the following methods were used: an extensive review of existing research studies, position papers, and policy documents; interviews with private-sector employers and labor market, policy, and academic analysts; and first-hand observations of beginning school-to-work transition initiatives. The review and analysis led to four major policy recommendations: (1) the work side of the school-to-work transition should be more energetically pursued; (2) opportunities to leverage naturally occurring work experiences that facilitate adolescents' personal and career development should be identified and exploited; (3) efforts to develop and recognize a full range of workplace certification techniques should be expanded; and (4) a wider range of attainable work-learning opportunities should be made available for disadvantaged youth. (The report contains 173 references and two appendixes: (1) a framework for a proposed school-to-work demonstration and (2) information on the work of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills.) (KC)

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Skills, Standards and Entry-Level Work

Elements of a Strategy for Youth Employability Development

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
1995

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Skills, Standards and Entry-Level Work

Elements of a Strategy for Youth Employability Development

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RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT SERIES

This series presents information about the results of projects funded by the Office of Policy and Research (OPR) of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. These projects deal with a wide range of training, employment, workplace literacy, labor market and related issues. The series is published under the direction of the OPR Dissemination Unit.

This report in the series was prepared by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), of Philadelphia, PA. The authors are Dr. Keith MacAllum, research associate, and Patricia Ma, assistant research associate. It is one of several products prepared by P/PV as part of the Department of Labor's Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project.

Contractors conducting research projects under Federal sponsorship are encouraged to express their own judgment freely. Therefore, this report does not necessarily represent the official opinion or policy of the Department of Labor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report benefitted from the talents and hard work of several P/PV staff members. In particular, we wish to thank Tom Smith, who provided valuable direction in the early phase of the project and thoughtful guidance throughout.

Jean Grossman, Michelle Gambone, Gary Walker and Crystal MacAllum read various drafts and provided constructive suggestions. Natalie Jaffe and Mike Callaghan capably handled the editing. Marina Barnett and Crystal Wyatt provided word processing assistance. Maxine Sherman processed the final document.

The authors also wish to thank Jerry Gundersen, Michaela Meehan, Susan Scott and Lauren Gibbs of the U.S. Department of Labor for their many helpful comments on an earlier draft of this report.

Work on the project was informed by the contributions and insights of many individuals in the academic, policy and business communities. Special thanks go to Doug Adair and Sally Conway of the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE); Ivan Charner of the National Institute for Work and Learning; G.J. Dusseldorp and Barbara Dunn of Dusco Community Services, Inc.; Ken Hoyt of Kansas State University; Charles Jett of the Critical Skills Foundation; Robin Leidner of the University of Pennsylvania; Jeff Lightburn of Taco Bell, Inc.; Larry Mikulecky of Indiana University; Mary Moorhouse of CAL, Inc.; Katherine Newman of Columbia University; Arnold Packer of Johns Hopkins University; Len Schlesinger of the Harvard Business School; Robert Sheets of Northern Illinois University; Larry Steinberg of Temple University; and P/PV's own Wade Gatling and Basil Whiting.

A debt of gratitude is owed to Maria Center, her staff and students at the Training for Retail and Commerce (TRAC) Program in Savannah, Georgia for providing an intimate look at how entry-level work experience can be integrated into an alternative education setting.

We especially wish to thank the participants in the two focus group sessions who shared with us their experiences and candid impressions of working with youth in the secondary labor market.

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I. PUBLIC POLICY, SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET

The recent policy interest in school-to-work programming has been focused on finding ways to develop in youth the skills they need to become productive members of the increasingly demanding labor market. The new School To Work Opportunities Act aims to do this by building a system connecting school-based and work-based learning in order to help youth make the transition from education to employment.

What is most noteworthy about the School to Work Opportunities Act is its explicit acknowledgement of the importance of work-based learning. Most recent work force development efforts directed at youth have emerged from within the education reform movement; their conception and focus, therefore, have been almost entirely school-centered. Complementary approaches that focus on the employer side of the equation have yet to be fully developed, let alone integrated with school-based strategies.

Recent studies of apprenticeship, tech prep, cooperative education and career academies programs suggest that such models typically favor the academically oriented student. The limitations of these efforts in reaching youth who need the most assistance in securing stable employment--and who need to be the central targets of school-to-work policy--must be acknowledged if our policies are to result in real labor force improvements.

By their very nature, school-based strategies fail to engage youth who have already dropped out of the school system. Given the academic orientation of prevailing models, they are unlikely to attract students who are still enrolled but disaffected. In addition, the selective entry requirements of some programs may prevent interested but educationally disadvantaged students from participating. Finally, these programs, even if implemented widely, are unlikely to reach or help the very large numbers of youth who move directly from high school to the workplace.

One way to overcome these limitations is to build initiatives that stress the "other side" of the school-to-work equation--employers. Millions of youth are already engaged, through their own efforts and interest, in real work. Throughout 1993, more than three million 16- to 19-year-olds worked part time, and almost two million more worked full time (U.S. Department of Labor, 1994).

Entry-level jobs in the secondary labor market are the largest and most important vehicle through which youth gain both income and initial experience as productive members of society. They are the port of entry for American youth from every racial, cultural, geographic and economic segment.

Yet for large numbers of economically disadvantaged and academically at-risk youth, the secondary labor market represents not only the port of entry, but a semi-permanent destina-

tion. Although not necessarily by design, the secondary labor market is perhaps the major employer of young, minority, inner-city workers. While the importance of basic academic skills and credentials cannot be overstated, efforts that build on their secondary labor market experience would represent an important adjunct to the current continuum of education and training programs.

However, the features of most secondary labor market jobs raise serious concerns about their potential as productive learning experiences. These jobs generally pay low wages and limit raises, offer little or no formal skill training, and present infrequent opportunities for advancement. Managers are often untrained to deal with the diverse needs of adolescents, and direct supervision of workers is often of questionable quality. Because profit margins are tight and powerfully affected by labor costs, executives are hesitant to experiment with new training techniques.

As currently configured, then, these jobs do little to meet the economic, developmental and educational needs of young people. They may also do little to meet the needs of primary labor market employers, who are leading the call for developing higher and more varied skills in their own employees.

There is evidence from adolescent development theory and program experience that young people can learn and mature in a wide variety of contexts if those contexts provide both challenge and support. Preliminary research shows that, if properly configured, even entry-level work can advance adolescents' career development.

While the popular school-to-work models suggest opportunities for youth to develop concurrently in two major contexts--the school and the workplace--the developmental potential of the workplace has received little attention. What has been emerging, though, is interest in defining and building on the skills and competencies that private employers view as critical, and that consequently influence their hiring decisions. Recent studies find that employees with basic interpersonal, thinking and workplace competencies are sought by employers in a cross-section of industries. In many instances, further development of these competencies is encouraged on the job, even if only informally, and they are in some ways transferable--i.e., they are valued by employers across a broad range of occupations.

To formalize this trend, the development and effective use of competency standards as a training tool is a task to which industry itself, with support from the U.S. Department of Labor, is beginning to turn. If this movement should prove successful, it will mark a significant increase in public/private cooperation. More significantly, it will represent an important opportunity for encouraging and documenting the acquisition of skills by young workers--and disadvantaged young workers in particular--in entry-level jobs across the United States.

These observations and trends raise the following policy questions:

- Can public policy devise effective strategies that seek to capitalize on the educational and developmental potential of private-sector entry-level jobs?
- What is the feasibility of using the secondary labor market in a formal way to promote skill development in youth?
- Can youth develop useful and transferable skills in these jobs?
- How can these skills be assessed, documented and certified?

This report represents the findings from a year-long consideration of these questions. It proposes a set of policy recommendations that, if implemented effectively, could add significant and strategic breadth to the array of school-to-work efforts currently in planning and under way.

The U.S. Department of Labor had been considering a number of these school-to-work issues when they asked P/PV in December 1992 to investigate how the second generation of materials emerging from the recommendations of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) could be most effectively used for work-based learning. As our consideration of this seemingly straightforward issue proceeded, we identified a number of parallel and interrelated trends that, when incorporated into the analysis, provided a much more complete and compelling picture of the workplace's potential as a developmental context for young people.

Therefore, this final report includes an overview not just of the skill standards movement, but also a reexamination of the role (and limitations) of current school-to-work efforts; a discussion of some industry sectors' movement toward high-performance workplaces; and a review of research on the potential of work experience to foster youth development. The report describes how these seemingly disparate issues are interrelated and together argue for using secondary labor market jobs to enhance youth's career development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is based on an extensive review of existing research studies, position papers and policy documents; interviews with private-sector employers and labor market, policy and academic analysts; and first-hand observations of nascent initiatives. Our reconnaissance suggests that the secondary labor market has the potential to reinforce the connection between work and schooling, address the developmental needs of young people and become, as it once was, the first step up the ladder to labor market success. Indeed, we conclude that the naturally occurring work experiences of youth represent a powerful, untapped arena for skill development.

The report includes an examination of the feasibility of engaging secondary labor market employers in national initiatives that would strengthen the current school-to-work effort. Many employers resist change for reasons of social philosophy and economics. Philosophically, they believe businesses exist to earn profits, not to serve as settings for youth development. They feel that education is the job of the public sector. This outlook fits the general historic pattern of American employers, who have long expected workers to arrive at the worksite with requisite capabilities. And on economic grounds, many employers are resistant to taking on responsibilities that they believe will reduce profitability.

We conclude, then, that if public policy initiatives are to be feasible, they must be structured in such a way that the private sector benefits from participation. Strategies that seek to enhance the initial work experience of youth within the secondary labor market must provide private-sector employers with opportunities to transform basic production and management practices in ways that benefit both the employee and the firm.

Some employers already see potential benefits from participating in such initiatives: reduced costly turnover, increased productivity, and a high-performance work force capable of moving up, within and across industries, thereby reducing the stigma of "dead-end" work often applied to the secondary labor market. These employers would like to be included in efforts to upgrade the labor force--efforts from which they largely have been excluded.

The traditional view that public policy should have a limited presence in the private workplace is currently being challenged by arguments that link national economic interests, international competition, a second-rate work force and this country's historically fragmented school-to-work system. Both public and private interests would benefit by joint efforts to upgrade both the skills of American workers and the nature of their employment opportunities.

The reviews and analyses that we conducted, detailed in the subsequent chapters, have led to four major policy recommendations that could shape and guide programmatic initiatives:

1. <u>The work side of the school-to-work transition should be more energetically pursued</u>.

   Corporate and industry involvement in the school-to-work movement to date has been limited to nominal representation on blue ribbon panels. This absence is notable because the centerpiece of the school-to-work reform movement, stimulated by comparisons to European systems, is almost always some form of "work-based learning," occurring, presumably, on a job of some kind.

   The industry-driven nature of training for young people in European countries is their distinguishing feature. By contrast, vocational education in the United States is almost entirely a school-based enterprise. While the School to Work Opportunities Act emphasizes workplace learning and connections to business partners, it provides no clear incentive for employers, whose cooperation is essential to any serious reform.

We recommend exploration of a diverse range of strategies, spanning a wide variety of work settings and industries, in which the potential of integrating real work into the school-to-work system can be fully tested.

2. Opportunities to leverage naturally occurring work experiences that facilitate adolescents' personal and career development should be identified and exploited.

Those who seek to improve the school-to-work transition must develop strategies that exploit naturally occurring opportunities to reach a large number and wide array of youth. Such strategies can build on youth's natural inclination to work by making their initial work experience a clear first step on the route to full productivity.

Conventional wisdom and exploratory research suggest that learning does occur in the workplace; unless work-based learning experiences are deliberately designed for learning, however, they remain deficient as learning environments, especially for the young and less educated.

3. Efforts to develop and recognize a full range of workplace certification techniques should be expanded.

With passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, it appears inevitable that some kind of national minimum skill standards will be set, and that all youth seeking to make the transition from schooling to employment will be required to meet these standards. Yet developing the mechanisms to measure workplace know-how, creating a generalized credential, and convincing a critical mass of businesses to recognize that credential present serious challenges.

The creation of voluntary national competency standards for what workers should know and be able to do is central to the current Administration's work force development agenda. Such standards would help shape the design of education and training programs and provide youth and adults with portable credentials that would be widely recognized by employers.

4. A wider range of attainable work-learning opportunities should be made available for disadvantaged youth.

The core programs identified as school-to-work models will likely favor youth who perform well in school, and show both interest in and the potential to benefit from a long-term, costly investment in training and education. Marginal students, and youth who have left school before graduating, are unlikely to find their way into these programs. Developing their potential is a challenge that must be addressed.

An opportunity to do so is indicated by the fact that large numbers of economically disadvantaged and academically at-risk youth are already in the secondary labor mar-

ket. Efforts to build effectively on their experience there should be recognized as a major policy aim, and a critical part of the continuum of education and training programs.

The broad policy recommendations proposed in this report are unlikely to be accomplished through a single program, initiative or strategy. Given the diversity among private-sector employers with regard to resources, orientation and leadership, we recognize that no single approach will be appropriate for all industries or firms. Our conclusion, drawn from this study and previous work, is that a set of interdependent demonstration projects should be undertaken over the next few years. Nine interrelated initiatives are suggested and outlined in the final chapter of this report.

This set of initiatives reflects our judgment that a variety of approaches must be taken to address the large and widespread changes required, given the newness of the approach and the number of issues about which we need further knowledge (knowledge that, in most cases, can only be developed through pilot and demonstration programs). In Appendix A, we detail one model that identifies and certifies job skills, offers a developmental sequence of jobs for young workers, and provides them with on-the-job and external supports.

REPORT OVERVIEW

The project was carried out as the third phase of research under the Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project (YRTAP), funded by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). ETA asked P/PV, under subcontract to Brandeis University, to conduct an analysis of how skill standards and the SCANS framework in particular fit with emerging efforts to enhance the career development and trajectory of young workers who find naturally occurring work experiences in the secondary labor market. Toward that end, this report compiles and synthesizes information addressing the following issues:

1. Recent policy regarding youth and work, culminating in the School to Work Opportunities Act of 1993. A thorough review of current policy was considered essential in order to ground any subsequent recommendations regarding use of the secondary labor market to enhance the career development of youth.

Recent initiatives and public policy were analyzed following an extensive review of the literature in the fields of youth, work, education reform and training. Published books and journal articles were supplemented by recent national reports, public policy statements and SCANS documents. P/PV's prior work for the Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project were also a major source of information [i.e., *Dilemmas in Youth Employment Programming* (1992); *Strengthening Programs for Youth* (1993); and *Finding One's Way* (1993)].

2. The current configuration of school-to-work programming and the recent skill standards initiatives, with a special focus on the influence and work of SCANS. The original work plan

called for a reconnaissance of how SCANS-based materials are employed by education and employment training programs. The final report expands this focus by exploring the broader and influential skill standards movement of which SCANS is a part, and by linking the skill standards movement to issues of entry level training, youth career development and workplace productivity.

The report's configuration of school-to-work programming is based on an analysis of current reports, the knowledge of experts in the field, including a wide network of program operators, and attendance at diverse conferences that focused on school-to-work policy and programs.

In addition to the data collection efforts discussed earlier, a review of the literature was conducted to uncover recent developments concerning the national skill standards movement. These efforts were supplemented by conversations with recognized leaders in the field, including Arnold Packer of Johns Hopkins; Doug Adair of the Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE); Ivan Charner of the National Institute for Work and Learning; Larry Mikulecky of Indiana University; Mary Moorhouse of CAL, Inc.; and Charles Jett of the Critical Skills Foundation.

3. The nature of the secondary labor market, the jobs youth hold in it, and the potential of using that context for skill development. While certain generalizations about the secondary labor market can be made, our reconnaissance uncovered significant variation within and across industrial sectors. Therefore, we were led to more carefully delineate the dimensions of the work experience most likely to determine relevant youth outcomes in this segment of the labor market.

To do so, we reviewed the most recent and relevant literature on the structure of the labor market, with special emphasis on youth's role, its size and growth, and effects of secondary labor market work experiences on youth outcomes. We benefitted from lengthy discussions with several academic researchers, including Robin Leidner of the University of Pennsylvania, Leonard Schlesinger of the Harvard Business School and Katherine Newman of Columbia University, who have studied various aspects of work in the secondary labor market.

To understand the nature of the secondary labor market job, and more specifically the supervision and training of young employees, P/PV conducted two focus groups in Philadelphia. The participants included about a dozen individuals with responsibility for hiring, training and/or supervising entry-level employees in a range of businesses in the service industry. Representatives from fast food restaurants, sit-down restaurants, hotels, hospitals and retail businesses attended these sessions.[1] The participants responded to an array of questions concerning work organization and training practices and were invited to give their reactions to

[1] The following firms were represented: A Plus Mini Market, Au Bon Pain, Howard Johnson, KFC, Lens Crafters, Moss Rehabilitation Hospital, The Philadelphia Ritz-Carlton, Ponderosa Steak House, Radio Shack, Taco Bell, TGI Friday's, and Urban Outfitters.

possible intervention scenarios. A wealth of data from these sessions, summarized in Novak (1994), was incorporated into the following chapters.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows: Chapter II gives an overview of recent public policies concerning youth and work, provides a critical review of current school to work strategies and introduces the critical nature of the skill standards movement. The chapter closes with an exploration of these developments' implications for school-to-work policy and programming.

Chapter III places youth in the context of the secondary labor market (SLM) and discusses the rationale, the challenges and opportunities for using the SLM as a context for youth development and as a stepping stone for career development.

Chapter IV suggests what an ideal work experience in the secondary labor market might look like, and discusses a set of feasibility issues at the national and individual employer level that promote and inhibit achieving that ideal. The chapter closes with a brief examination of the high-performance workplace concept and its implications for entry-level workers in the secondary labor market.

Chapter V presents the report's general findings, discusses their major policy implications, and offers specific recommendations for initiatives aimed at improving school-to-work programming through enrichment of youth's naturally occurring work experiences.

The report includes two appendices. Appendix A presents the framework for a proposed SLM demonstration (an approach called WorkPlus), and analyzes its strengths and weaknesses. It offers a detailed description of what such an initiative would require and look like. Appendix B offers supplemental information concerning the work of the SCANS Commission, its reports and related projects.

II. SCHOOL-TO-WORK POLICY AND CURRENT INITIATIVES

In this chapter, we first discuss the recent history and assumptions of public policy as they relate to youth and work, and suggest that changing labor market conditions could force public policy to intrude on free market economics. We then examine the new School to Work Opportunities Act, its goals, and the current education and training initiatives intended as the avenues to reach those goals. We conclude by reviewing the limitations of the current models due to their neglect of naturally occurring work experience.

PUBLIC POLICY REGARDING WORK AND YOUTH

Over the past 10 years, the search for ways to better prepare the American work force has focused on education and school reform. But recently, an emphasis on labor force skills, training and productive employment has begun to force a thoughtful reconsideration of public policy regarding youth and work.

Public policy with regard to employment and training in the United States reflects tension between two sometimes conflicting cultural perspectives. The first concerns the fundamental importance of work: as a nation, we regard work as a defining, essential activity that confers income and status.

The second recognizes that work, labor markets and jobs are the province of private employers. The broadly held view, consistent with the free-market principles on which our economy is based, is that the free decisions of private firms regarding hiring and the structure of jobs are most likely to be sound and lead to efficient outcomes. Accordingly, public policy has respected the notion that regulation of job structure should be limited to specified areas (e.g., basic safety, child labor, minimum wage); that the organization of labor markets is best determined by market forces; and that free operation should be permitted through laissez faire policies.

These two perspectives have coexisted most comfortably during economic upturns, when jobs have been relatively plentiful and laissez faire policies appeared to keep labor demand high enough to accommodate most of those who sought to work. In periods of recession--and of high unemployment--accommodations have proved necessary, and these have been shaped as much by politics as by economics. Indeed, since the Depression, national administrations have periodically tried to make the opportunity to work more widely available to unemployed adults, young workers, welfare recipients and dislocated workers. The current administration has shown its willingness to continue these efforts on a limited scale.

Despite the presence of a few prominent federal initiatives, such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), public policy over the past decade has largely relied on market forces to create jobs, even if that meant surviving sustained periods of high unemployment until economic conditions improved and produced something closer to equilibrium between job oppor-

tunities and job-seekers. At issue in the present school-to-work agenda is not mere youth employment per se, but productive and meaningful employment. According to Dr. Kenneth Gray of Pennsylvania State University, while the unemployment rate in December 1993 was lower than it had been for the previous 18 months, "the job index, which measures the quality of jobs in the aggregate, is at its lowest point since it's been calculated."[2]

The quality of jobs is intricately linked to the skills they require. The so-called skills gap prevents those who lack the proper education and training from attaining high-quality positions in the labor market--positions that both add value to the economy through a product or service and pay a decent wage. Consequently, the question arises: how can public policy speed the transition to greater equilibrium?

Comprehensive public youth employment initiatives have been infrequent.[3] In part, this reflects a complex perspective regarding adolescents and work. Youth are certainly expected to work and, over time, to find respectable places in the work force and society. But these expectations are tempered by competing realities and beliefs: youth are inexperienced and unskilled, and the opportunities for them to engage in work are correspondingly limited (Borman, 1991; Howell, 1993). We expect youth to be in school and learning, under the assumption that formal education will help them develop skills that will consequently make them better workers. Thus, there are concerns that youth not work "too much" during high school and that work not degrade school performance (Steinberg et al., 1993; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986; D'Amico, 1984).

In addition, adolescence is a time when youth have competing educational, social and recreational interests. Therefore, youth's attachment to the labor force is often weak. They may work when the need for income is strong, and leave when they wish to pursue other interests, or when schooling or personal needs intervene (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986). Youth also vary in their maturity and sense of responsibility. Work responsibilities, therefore, must complement their need and desire to explore varying pursuits and activities.

Some employers must tolerate youth's casual, intermittent and short-term needs for work and income, since the nature of many jobs makes them unattractive to adult employees. Accordingly, these employers have shown consistent willingness to shape and rework schedules to accommodate youth (Applebaum and Batt, 1993; Blank, 1990; Doeringer, 1991). This depen-

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[2] Keynote address, STW Conference, Hershey, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1994.

[3] One of the few is the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP)--though for most of its existence, the program was mainly used as income transfer. Only within the past several years has its larger potential as a youth development tool been explored, through the addition of education and other services. For further discussion of how SYETP might be used more constructively, see Chapter V.

dence on unskilled youth has created many job opportunities for young people, but has discouraged employers from upgrading the work responsibilities associated with these positions.[4]

Over the past decade, however, both public and policymaker views on traditional modes of work have changed perceptibly. Growing apprehension about the capacity of the United States to compete successfully in the international marketplace, and about the skill level of its work force, have aroused unprecedented concern. In addition, widespread criticisms of public education have centered on its seeming inability to prepare new workers for a workplace in which job and skill requirements are constantly rising.

Whereas, in the past, the role of youth in the labor market was typically viewed as marginal, young workers are now considered integral members of the labor market. Consequently, creating a coherent "school-to-work" transition system to move youth into and through the labor market has become a critical item on the national agenda.

The School to Work Opportunities Act

The School to Work Opportunities Act initiates efforts to develop a comprehensive national system for promoting the transition of youth from the world of education to the world of work. The legislation is designed to support states as they build infrastructures to facilitate local partnerships--composed of employers, educators, labor and others--offering young people access to performance-based education and training that bridges school and work. Such a sequence would lead to portable certificates recognized by employers; would prepare students for jobs in high-skill, high-wage careers; and would increase their opportunities for further education.

The programmatic bedrock of all school-to-work programs under the School to Work Opportunities Act comprises three core components: school-based learning, work-based learning and "connecting activities." The school-based learning component consists of a multiyear sequence of instruction--typically beginning in the 11th grade and ending after at least one year of postsecondary education--tied to high academic skills and standards. The work-based learning component includes a planned program of job training and experiences in a broad range of occupational tasks, with priority given to paid work experience and workplace mentoring. Connecting activities, intended to ensure that learning occurs in both the school and work spheres, might include provision of technical assistance in designing work-based learning, provision of career guidance and placement of program graduates in jobs or further education and training, collecting information on students after program completion, and linking school-to-work programs with strategies to upgrade the learning potential in existing workplaces.

[4] See Chapter III for a thorough discussion of the scale and nature of the youth labor market.

While the framework of a national school-to-work system is formalized through the core components, states and communities still have the flexibility to devise a system that meets local conditions. For example, states may seek waivers from federal laws and regulations that might impede the development of a school-to-work system. However, critics see the need for an adequate review process to determine which regulations can and cannot be waived, and are concerned that the amount of flexibility in the School to Work Opportunities Act might result in a system that lacks the coherence and comprehensiveness it seeks to attain.

Skepticism over the School to Work Opportunities Act is further fueled by the fact that the legislation encourages states to build on existing vocational education and job training efforts, such as tech-prep, youth apprenticeship, cooperative education and career academies.[5] This strategy makes sense operationally, but according to some observers, imposes serious limitations. For example, Glover and Weisberg (1994) fear that the school-to-work movement will remain an almost entirely school-based enterprise. Others claim the School to Work Opportunities Act "represents a sellout to special interest groups" representing job training and vocational education (*Vocational Training News*, 1993d).

Proponents claim the system can be set up quickly by building on existing programs, but some analysts and policymakers favor drawing more heavily on employers' ability to train on the job. This perspective calls for expanding on work experience as a learning, skill-building experience by using work tasks to master skill sets and have that mastery certified, and using supervisors and managers as trainers, educators, mentors and certifiers.

Ultimately, the emergent school-to-work structure the School to Work Opportunities Act has been designed to stimulate and support will require substantial changes on the part of schools and employers. To date, school reform has received considerable attention, but relatively little attention has been directed to changing the nature of work for young would-be "apprentices," or to organizing American employers to become an American equivalent of the German "Kammers,"[6] considered essential for fashioning the job side of the youth apprenticeship equation into developmentally effective work experiences (Glover and Weisberg, 1994).

Instead, the School to Work Opportunities Act legislation encourages states to build on both new and traditional school-to-work initiatives. The strengths and weaknesses of these models have been debated in the literature, and it is to them that we now turn.

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[5] These models will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

[6] Apprenticeships in Germany are administered at the local level by industry-based chambers (Kammers). A key role of the chambers is maintaining quality control, accomplished by pre-qualifying firms to train apprentices, monitoring firms, administrating the exams and so forth. In addition to fostering work-based learning, the chambers provide a wide variety of services to firms to help make them more competitive. For more information, see Glover and Weisberg (1994).

CURRENT SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVES

> *It would be wrong to say that the transition between school and the work world is the "weakest link" in our education and training system--wrong because this assumes there is a link at all. For the students not going on to college or to further training, school ends one day and the search for a job--any job, not a career--begins the next.* (William T. Grant Foundation, 1988:39)

While college-bound students have an array of educational and social supports to guide them to their destination, young people who want to work after they graduate have been left on their own (Allum, 1993; Bailey and Merritt, 1993). The high schools that many of these students attend are considered weak, failing to provide strong motivation or incentives for students to work hard (Rosenbaum, 1989). More disturbingly, they have been viewed by many as unable to teach the specific or even the general skills needed in the modern workplace (U.S. Department of Labor, 1992b; Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, 1990; William T. Grant Foundation, 1988; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

Although high school vocational training may have been intended to prepare the noncollege-bound for entry into the work world, it seems not to have been particularly successful in this task, in part because of its inability to provide relevant training (Bishop, 1988; Stern et al., 1986 in Newman and Stack, 1992). The few examples of economic benefits related to vocational education are found among students who take a concentrated course of study in a specific area, have some work experience in that area, and manage to find related employment. (See Stern et al., 1986 and Borman and Hopkins, 1987, cited in Newman and Stack, 1992; *Vocational Training News*, 1993c.)

More frequently, the noncollege-bound--high school graduates and dropouts alike--spend their young adulthood drifting from one low-paying job in the secondary labor market to another, with little opportunity for training or career advancement (Olson, 1994a).[7] Although many eventually exit this "churning" process within the secondary labor market and move on to quality jobs, some find the exit to be very difficult and long in coming (Hoyt, 1994; Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993). Some never advance.

Current initiatives to address these trends aim to systematically construct a bridge from education to employment. The most frequently cited models on which the anticipated school-to-work system will be built are cooperative education, tech-prep, career academies and youth apprenticeship. However, as shown in Table 1, these are not necessarily the most widely available models.

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[7] The secondary labor market, composed mainly of low-skill and low-paying jobs, is defined in more detail in Chapter III.

Table 1

PREVALENCE OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ACADEMIC YEAR 1990-91

	Weighted Percentage of Schools[a]	Approximate Number Enrolled	Percentage Enrolled, Grades 11 and 12
Cooperative Education	49%	403,000	7.7%
Work Experience[b]	34	193,000*	3.7*
School-Based Enterprise[c]	19	N/A	N/A
Tech-Prep	7	100,000	1.9*
School to Apprenticeship[d]	6	16,700*	0.32
Youth Apprenticeship	2	3,500	0.07*
Career Academies	1	N/A	N/A

Source: *School-to-Work Programs and Services in Secondary Schools and Two-Year Postsecondary Institutions: Findings from the National Assessment of Vocational Education* by David Stern (1992).

Note: Figures denoted by an asterisk are extrapolated by authors based on this source data.

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[a]Denominator includes schools that did not respond to the questions.

[b]Includes all programs that allow students to earn school credit through paid and unpaid employment both in and outside their field of vocational study.

[c]Includes activities that engage students in producing goods or services for sale to or use by people other than the participating students themselves.

[d]Combines coursework and paid or unpaid employment so that graduating seniors are eligible to enter formal registered apprenticeship program.

The following are brief descriptions of the four most often cited school-to-work models, based on recent reviews and studies (Olson, 1994a; Bailey and Merritt, 1993; Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993):

- Cooperative Education. Operated by individual schools as part of their vocational-education programs, cooperative education provides students with part-time jobs during the school year, often in their fields of study. Job placements are arranged by a vocational teacher or co-op coordinator. Written training agreements spell out what the student is expected to learn and what the employer is expected to provide. Participation in such a program typically lasts a year or less, and both on-the-job learning and coordination between the school and worksite tend to be less structured than in other approaches. Most programs provide no credentials for workplace accomplishments. About 403,000 high school students participate in cooperative programs, or 8 percent of those in Grades 9 through 12.

- Tech-Prep. These programs typically merge the last two years of high school with the first two years of postsecondary education in a coherent program of study. Proficiency is required in mathematics, science, communications and technology. The program leads to an associate degree or a certificate in a career field. Tech prep programs offer broad preparation for a cluster of occupations. A work component is sometimes included, and some programs offer employment during the summers. Employers provide job placements and serve as advisers for the design and implementation of programs. As of 1991-92, 41 percent of regular school districts, 82 percent of vocational districts and three-fourths of community colleges reported that they had begun to develop tech-prep programs, though most were still in their infancy. Approximately 100,000 students participate in such programs nationwide.

- Career Academies. Organized as "schools within schools" where teachers and students remain together over a period of years, career academies try to break down the anonymity of large high schools and foster stronger student relationships among teachers, employers and peers. Each academy focuses on a particular career theme, such as finance or health care, and provides academic and vocational instruction, workplace exposure and career counseling in a structured program. Local employers serve as advisers and mentors, and provide job placements and internships for students. There are now more than 200 high school career academies nationwide.

- Youth Apprenticeships. Youth apprenticeships combine structured learning about a broad occupational cluster in school and at the worksite. Programs typically begin in the 11th grade and include at least one year of postsecondary education. They certify that students possess the skills needed to advance within an industry, and may or may not be tied to registered apprenticeships, which are primarily offered by unions and trade associations to prepare adults for specific technical fields. In 1990, only about 3,500 students participated in youth apprenticeships.

The Potential of Current Models

These models are encouraging for several reasons, but primarily because they avoid education and training practices structured around outdated assumptions: that learners are passive receivers of wisdom; that what is learned should be broken down into isolated pieces; that getting the right answer is the purpose of learning; and that skills and knowledge should be acquired independently of their context. Education and training based on these assumptions miss that human beings are inquisitive, and are at their best when fully and actively engaged in solving problems they find meaningful (Berryman and Bailey, 1992).

In contrast, the current initiatives relate to the "real" world. They recognize a growing body of evidence that suggests many students could learn better and perform more competently in the context of solving real-world problems (e.g., Brooks and Brooks, 1993; Gambone, 1993; Sarason, 1993; Gardner, 1983).

Another encouraging aspect of the recent school-to-work models is their recognition of the role a well-articulated, multiyear sequence of career guidance activities can play in adolescents' career development. Structured career guidance programs offer vehicles for opening access to human and institutional resources, ensuring multiple levels and types of reinforcement, exploiting existing opportunity structures and exploring new ones. Despite wide recognition that career planning is a long-term process, most youth--when they receive any assistance at all--typically get it only in late adolescence, when it is time to look for their first job (Allum, 1993).

Although it is still too early to assess the latest school-to-work models, preliminary research on some has found positive effects on attitudes, attendance and dropout rates. For example, students in cooperative education tend to be more positive about school, perceive a stronger connection between school and work, and have higher attendance. Moreover, the quality of jobs held by co-op students tend to be higher than those taken by nonco-op students. The co-op students tend to be placed in positions in which they learn new things, use reading and writing on the job, have contact with adults, perform meaningful work, and do work related to their desired career (Kazis and Stern quoted in Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993).

Evidence of academic persistence, graduation and postsecondary enrollment has also been demonstrated in tech-prep and career academies (e.g., Stern et al., 1992; Goldberger, 1993). Comparable data on economic outcomes have not yet appeared.

The evidence cited here indicates that the United States has created a set of promising school-to-work programs already showing limited success. However, as critical observers are quick to point out, none of the existing models appears to encompass all the criteria sought legislatively through the School to Work Opportunities Act.

The Limitations of Current Models

The limitations of the current school-to-work models have both programmatic and conceptual dimensions. Our review of recent reports examining how existing school-to-work programs have been structured discloses limitations with regard to participant selection and employer involvement.

Restricted Participation

Current school-to-work programs and traditional vocational education programs serve different types of students. In general, the newer models do not recognize the categories "vocational" and "academic." They tend to recruit "middle" students--young people who probably would not enroll in college and do not have severe academic or behavioral problems. As these programs mature, they expect to be better able to accommodate young people who face greater risks (Olson, 1994a).

While originally designed as dropout-prevention programs, career academies now enroll a broader range of students. For example, in Philadelphia, where the academy movement began, the proportion of minorities enrolled in career academies fell from 95 percent in 1986 to 77 percent in 1990 (Philadelphia High School Academies, 1991). This may be due to increased efforts to screen applicants on past academic performance and interest. During the summer after freshman year, students may have to take additional coursework to prepare for entry into an academy (Olson, 1994b). And while both career academies and tech-prep programs use applied coursework to better connect academic subject matter to real-world applications, both have begun to resemble more traditional college-prep programs (Bailey and Merritt, 1993).

Most co-op programs have admissions standards--an average GPA of at least 2.0, good attendance, a positive attitude and a lack of disciplinary problems--in addition to the requirements of specific employers. Nonetheless, co-op students tend to come from lower socioeconomic levels and to have below-average test scores (Bailey and Merritt, 1993).

The stated goals of these new models are to reach students with a broad range of abilities, not just "at-risk" students, and to encourage students to continue on to postsecondary education. These goals seem sensible, given the well-documented relationship between schooling and economic outcomes, and the stigma often associated with programs targeting disadvantaged groups. (See Mytych-DelPonte, 1993:159.) Yet, these programs will likely favor youth who perform well in school, and who show both the interest and potential to benefit from a long-term, costly investment in training and education. Marginal students, and those who have left school before graduating, are unlikely to find their way into these programs.

In fact, several studies have found that some recent school-to-work-programs either fail to serve marginalized populations (Hoerner et al., 1992) or, if they do target such groups, face problems in finding and retaining students who meet selection criteria. Goldberger's (1993)

evaluation of Boston's Project ProTech found that even after the program relaxed academic requirements for admission, the number of students who qualified for ProTech was alarmingly small and most students who entered with poor academic records were unable to complete the first year.

An important consideration, especially for economically disadvantaged youth, is the availability of paid work experience. If programs are unable to pay students for work experiences, only those students who can afford to forego earnings will participate. It is worth noting that the National Council of La Raza has pointed out that in the European youth apprenticeship system, a teen's job is to go to school. In the United States, the picture is different for many youth, who must find jobs to pay for food, shelter, transportation and, if they can afford it, higher education. La Raza views youth apprenticeships as a positive alternative for Hispanic and other minority students, but only if paid work experience is available and accessible.

Hence, the danger exists that without paid work experiences, school-to-work initiatives will reach and serve only a fraction of the "forgotten half": adequately performing students still enrolled in school. Out-of-school youth who are not working, are looking for work or, most important for this discussion, are working but "churning" thr[illegible]h low-wage, low-skilled jobs in the secondary labor market remain beyond the influence of these strategies. For these youth, as well as for those disaffected youth on the verge of dropping out of school, a wider range of attainable work-learning opportunities must be developed.

Lack of Employer Involvement

While the School to Work Opportunities Act emphasizes workplace learning and connections to business partners, many feel that "it provides no clear incentive for the employers, whose cooperation . . . is a prerequisite to any serious reform effort" (Glover and Weisberg, 1994).

In contrast to the industry-driven nature of training for young people in European countries, vocational education in the United States is almost entirely a school-based enterprise (Glover and Weisberg, 1994). The extent of American business involvement to date has been limited at best, and has often been confined to mere job exposure. If the new models are meant to merge the traditionally distinctive environments of the classroom and workplace, employing formalized instruction in both, full involvement by key players on both sides of the school-to-work equation is essential (Bailey and Merritt, 1993).

For example, in the California career academies, recruiting mentors and providing substantive summer internships are persistent problems. Last year in Pasadena, only 60 percent of the students who expected to have mentors received one, and only 30 percent of students landed paid internships after their junior year. Moreover, summer internships cannot provide the kind of sustained and structured learning that characterizes more intensive work-based approaches, such as youth apprenticeships (Olson, 1994b).

Although Lynn and Wills' (1994) study of 245 employers participating in 18 school-to-work programs did not show the recruitment of employers to be an insurmountable challenge, it did indicate that most employers, even the large ones, took only a few students per program. More than half of the participating firms surveyed had 50 or fewer employees. Moreover, even after years of operation, most of these school-based programs had only a small percentage of students participating in a work-based component. Only two of the programs surveyed had more than 10 percent of the students in a work-based experience; the rest had an average of 3.8 percent. A recent report by Pauly, Kopp and Haimson (1994) substantiated many of these findings. Most of the employers participating in their study provided three or fewer job slots for students.

Securing employer participation is difficult for several reasons. First, the employers targeted in school-to-work initiatives are mostly in the primary labor market; traditionally, they do not hire young workers and are unlikely to have sufficient job openings to hire all an initiative's graduates. They usually prefer to wait until workers have matured (i.e., are in their mid-20s), have left their "floundering" period and are ready to settle down. The high rate of turnover among young workers also discourages employers from investing in school-to-work initiatives. Training costs likewise inhibit employer participation, though research indicates that training increases the tenure of employees (Mincer, 1988 cited in Bailey and Merritt, 1993).

MAKING WORK-LEARNING WORK

Creating high-quality learning experiences and getting employers involved in developing the workplace as an instructional site are major challenges facing the school-to-work agenda. Bailey and Merritt (1993) raise two critical questions on this issue: first, are American workplaces up to the task? And second, how should a learning experience on the job be structured?

Reservations about the quality of current on-the-job learning abound. In an employer survey, the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (1990) found that in 95 percent of American companies, only a small group of employees, usually educated planners and supervisors, hold the challenging responsibilities of planning strategies, implementing changes, motivating workers and solving problems. In these workplaces, which still cling to traditional production processes, opportunities for employees to learn on the job are limited or nonexistent. Thus, even if such employers were convinced to take on young apprentices, the amount students would be able to learn in these settings is questionable (Bailey and Merritt, 1993). Pauly, Kopp and Haimson's (1994) review of innovative programs suggests "there may be a trade-off between the quality of workplace learning and the ability of a program to offer workplace learning to a large number of students."

Merritt (1994:25) also questions the ability of traditional school-to-work programs to promote learning in the workplace. She argues that "Current programs have yet to prove that the workplace can be an effective provider of education for a large segment of American youth. Moreover, they have yet to establish a role for the workplace beyond a supplement which

interests and motivates students." As she observes, this may in large part be due to the simple fact that "little is known about learning that takes place on the job" (Merritt, 1994:25).

An alternative approach to building on the work-learning component is making the classroom more like the workplace. As Merritt claims, "There is increased potential for simulated work experience based in the classroom, which has yet to be seriously addressed or analyzed" (cf. Stern, 1992). Such simulated work experiences avoid the need to recruit and retain employer partners, but continue to place the burden of responsibility for reform on our school system.

Hoyt (1994) furthers the argument that "schools are workplaces" by suggesting "the concept of 'transition from school to work' should be abolished." While recognizing the distinction between schooling and employment, Hoyt proposes a paradigm that recognizes the classroom as a workplace where both the student and the teacher are conceptualized as workers. This can be interpreted as a corollary to his earlier conception of individuals in work settings as lifelong learners (Hoyt, 1978).

SUMMARY

As they currently stand, the school-to-work models reflect critical imbalances that have characterized most public policies regarding youth and work. First, these models are heavily weighted toward the education system. They seek to make the high school experience more meaningful and compelling, thus encouraging students to complete school and continue their education. They assume that work experience alone can accomplish this (Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993), and therefore view work as the end point and intermediate work experience as an educational supplement. Despite the inherent value of secondary education, a significant opportunity to enhance adolescents' career development will be missed if we rely solely on restructuring the school experience while neglecting the work experience. Therefore, concerted efforts to identify and enhance learning opportunities in the workplace must be developed.

Moreover, the concept of school-to-work as it has been interpreted thus far implies a one-time, one-way transition, when in fact, many students and workers experience alternating spells of work and learning. Ironically, the term itself suggests a separation between school and work, rather than stressing integration of the two.

In addition to being unable to address the out-of-school population, current school-to-work strategies cannot be relied on to help those young people who are most disaffected with school. While some may remain in school, they are likely also to be isolated from many of the newer school-to-work programs.

For these reasons, it becomes apparent that additional avenues to the world of work need to be more energetically pursued. After more carefully examining the nature and effects of naturally occurring work experiences in the youth labor market, the next chapter begins the exploration of alternative approaches.

III. YOUTH IN THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET

Current efforts to address the needs of noncollege-bound youth have paid little attention to the potential of the jobs these youth find on their own, often in the secondary labor market. In this chapter, we examine this neglected avenue for facilitating young people's personal and career development. We first discuss the secondary labor market's increasing size and scope, and how this growth as well as the nature of these jobs, as currently structured, warrant special attention especially for noncollege-bound young workers. The rationale for enhancing young workers' experiences in these jobs will be followed in the next chapter by a discussion of what such enhanced jobs would look like.

GROWTH AND CHANGE IN THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET

"Secondary labor market" is a widely used but loosely defined term that encompasses the entry-level stratum of the labor market.[8] Jobs within the secondary labor market are often part-time and pay the minimum wage. They are further characterized by high turnover, limited training needs, low skill requirements, routinization and high "fungibility"--the perception that one worker is pretty much as good as any other. Most provide few or no benefits and have little room for advancement.

Secondary labor market jobs are found across a wide spectrum of industries and occupational groupings. However, they are concentrated in the retail, clerical and hospitality sectors, especially restaurant, supermarket and fast-food chains, where many youth have found their first jobs and gained their first formal experience of work (Howell, 1993).

During 1993, more than three million 16- to 19-year-olds worked part time, and almost two million more worked full time in secondary labor market jobs (U.S. Department of Labor, 1994). They are the port of entry for youth from every gender, racial, cultural, geographic and income segment in the country (Charner and Fraser, 1984).

As the number of secondary labor market jobs has exploded in recent years, however, they have no longer provided stepping stones for many young workers. The economy has created a large and growing number of jobs with secondary labor market characteristics and placed more and more people into them--not as opportunities to mature or to sample various work experiences, but as semi-permanent "career" destinations. These changes have taken place in a context that includes the following indicators:

Rising service-producing jobs. Over the next 20 years, the fastest growing occupations in percentage terms will be those requiring considerable skill. However, absolute job growth will be highest in medium- to low-skill fields: service occupations, administrative support,

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[8] For more on the secondary labor market and/or "dual economy" see Hamilton, 1990; Brown, 1982; Howell, 1993; Parcel and Mueller, 1983.

and marketing and sales together account for almost half of the net new jobs that will be created. In the service category, the largest working groups will be cooks, nursing aides, waiters and janitors. Among administrative support jobs, secretaries, clerks and computer operators will predominate. In marketing and sales, most of the new slots will be for cashiers and retail salespersons. With the exception of computer operators, most of these large categories require only modest levels of education and training (Johnston and Packer, 1987; Holzer, 1992; U.S. Department of Labor, 1992a; Howell, 1993).

The current surge in discount retail store openings is one example of the rising number of low-skill positions. Since the recession's end in March 1991, the nation's discount retailers, led by Wal-Mart, have made significant contributions to job growth. While national job growth from March 1991 to August 1993 was only 1.8 percent, jobs with discount retailers grew 48 percent. Wal-Mart alone increased its number of jobs by 43.5 percent (Uchitelle, 1993).

As the "factories" of the 1990s, discount retailers are providing a new version of the full-time job with benefits that millions of blue-collar Americans previously found in manufacturing. But wages, benefits and security in this new version are just a shadow of what manufacturing jobs traditionally offered. Most wages are between $5 and $9 an hour, and full-time now means 23 to 30 hours per week. Whereas manufacturers pay all or most of workers' benefits, workers at discount retailers typically contribute 30 percent of those costs. Discount retail workers' jobs are also sensitive to market forces; when sales weaken, hours are reduced (Uchitelle, 1993).

Changing composition of the low-wage work force. Contrary to common perception, only 29 percent of minimum-wage workers are teenagers. Another 22 percent are aged 20 to 24, and half are aged 25 or older. More than half are employed in retail trade; another quarter are in other service jobs. The fact that 70 percent of low-wage job-holders are over age 20 and half are over 25 is testimony to the secondary labor market's sheer size and capacity to absorb non-youth workers (Levitan, Gallo and Shapiro, 1993).

Increasing difficulty in finding permanent employment. Economist Paul Osterman reports recent data indicating that half of workers entering their 30s had not found a steady job and a third were still suffering prolonged bouts of unemployment:

A bit over one-third of all men beginning their 30s had failed to find a job that had lasted for at least a year and another 16 percent were in their job for only a year. Among high school graduates, the picture is slightly better but still troubling: over 30 percent had not held a job for a year and another 12 percent had only one year of tenure at their current job. Among all women, the picture is worse than it is for men; however, for women who had remained in the labor force for the four years prior to the survey, the pattern is very similar to that among males (Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993).

Declining wage structures. American workers of all ages suffered an average reduction of more than 10 percent in real wages in the 1980s. According to The Children's Defense Fund, the average weekly earnings of nonsupervisory workers dropped by 19 percent between 1973 and 1990. Workers without postsecondary education suffered the sharpest losses. For example, the average annual earnings of recent high school dropouts (male and female) fell by 27 percent between 1973 and 1987. Even the earnings of high school graduates without college education fell by 14 percent during this period.

Between 1979 and 1989, the real value of the minimum wage dropped 31 percent. And more than half of all minimum-wage earners are between 16 and 24 years old (Mencimer, 1994).

Changing poverty structure. Until 1980, full-time, year-round minimum wage earnings were sufficient to keep a family of three out of poverty. Today, only a single individual living alone can escape poverty on such earnings.

After declining in the 1960s and 1970s, poverty rates not only are climbing, but are also shifting to younger age groups. While Medicare and Social Security increases have lifted three-quarters of the non-working elderly out of poverty since the 1960s, the percentage of young full-time workers living in poverty has actually increased. According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

> The percentage of young, full-time workers earning less than the federal poverty level more than doubled during the 1980s and early 1990s. In 1992, 47 percent of full-time workers ages 18 to 24 made less than $13,091 annually, the inflation-adjusted poverty level for a family of four. In 1979, 23 percent of that age group earned less than the poverty level.
>
> Among all ages in 1992, 18 percent of full-time workers earned less than the poverty level, compared with 12 percent in 1979 (Olson, 1994c).

For young people, particularly the noncollege-bound, the change and growth in the secondary labor market presents a mixed picture. While the pattern of future job growth means that there will be a fair number of new medium- and low-skill jobs created during this decade, many will be in occupations characterized by jobs that are low-paying, contingent and with limited or no mobility. Furthermore, given the limited skill development and growth potential of most secondary labor market jobs, it becomes increasingly likely that many young people will find the path to the primary labor market much more difficult and longer to traverse.

THE NATURE OF SECONDARY LABOR MARKET JOBS

As currently structured by employers and experienced by young employees, most jobs in the secondary labor market are low-skill and routinized, and provide few opportunities to acquire and use more sophisticated skills (Borman and Reisman, 1986; Borman, 1991; Leidner, 1993;

Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986). In *Fast Food, Fast Talk*, Leidner (1993:72) describes the routinization of the McDonald's window worker's job:

> As a customer gave an order, the window worker simply pressed the cash register button labeled with the name of the selected product. There was no need to write the orders down, because the buttons lit up to indicate which products had been selected. Nor was there any need to remember prices, because the prices were programmed into the machines.

Not surprisingly, many youth feel they are "overqualified" for their first jobs; they and their parents say that young people today have to work "beneath their abilities" at jobs with low expectations, little responsibility and slim possibilities for advancement (Education Writers Association, 1990:3).

Despite the high degree of routinization in secondary labor market jobs, workers are never completely insulated from customers. Secondary labor market workers, especially in fast-food restaurants, often "serve as buffers, absorbing the hostilities consumers feel when organizational routines do not meet their needs or expectations" (Glenn and Feldberg, 1979 cited in Leidner, 1993). And in many instances, they receive inadequate support or guidance from their supervisors to deal with customers' demands (Leidner, 1993; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986).

Jobs in the secondary labor market have few opportunities for advancement, and in many cases, the "advancement" is only a small step up a short ladder. Pay is usually low, and the small increases that occur, typically 5 to 15 cents an hour, do not bring workers to a livable wage.

Since the work is often low-paying, repetitive and unappealing, the incentive to leave or change jobs is high. Borman and Reisman's (1986) study of recent high school graduates and dropouts in their first jobs found that most left the jobs voluntarily. Youth who quit most frequently said their reasons were lack of adequate pay, and harsh and rigid standards for the performance of demeaning and physically demanding tasks.

Left unabated, these features will likely persist, with all the adverse social effects they imply. From the employers' perspective, secondary labor market workers, especially part-timers, are viewed "in a single context: as non-promotable workers who solve particular scheduling and peak-demand problems within the firm" (Blank, 1990). Consequently, many employers develop low expectations of workers. As one fast food manager in Borman and Reisman's (1986) study remarked:

> Well, we figure for our time investment--training, things along this line--if they stay six months we are basically breaking even. Ideally, we would like them to stay as long as possible, but we do look at the six-month factor, at least I do.

And in the focus groups conducted by P/PV, first-line supervisors of young workers valued their energy, liveliness, flexibility and willingness, but complained about their unrealistic expectations, lack of dedication, immaturity and turnover.

In past decades, young people tolerated unsatisfying secondary labor market jobs because they served interim purposes: providing income and initial work experience. Most youth moved on to college or to primary labor market jobs with good pay and benefits. In stronger economic times, employers also were better able to tolerate their young employees' inexperience and turnover. However, circumstances have changed. In spite of the growing number of secondary labor market jobs and an excess supply of labor, employers, especially fast-food employers, are facing stiffer competition that has shaved their narrow profit margins and heightened their interest in hiring workers who can be productive and provide quality service. At the same time, we find many high school leavers entering and remaining in the secondary labor market for an extended period of time--perhaps 10 to 12 years--before acquiring skills marketable in the primary labor market (Hoyt, 1994:3).[9]

To meet the national goal of increased work force productivity, the length of time between leaving secondary school and landing a career track position must be reduced. One unexplored avenue to shortening and facilitating young workers' increasingly precarious transitions may be to assist workers in the context of secondary labor market jobs they already naturally hold.

THE RATIONALE FOR ENHANCING YOUTH'S SECONDARY LABOR MARKET WORK EXPERIENCE

The most obvious and powerful rationale for building on the secondary labor market is that, for most young people, it remains the largest and most important vehicle for work experience, for income and (along with public education) for connection to eventual careers and roles in society. About 70 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds work in secondary labor market occupations related to sales, clerical work, laboring, and service (Osterman, 1994). The secondary labor market's potential for improving youth's long-term prospects is intriguing. It is one of the few segments of economic society that actually wants youth, is willing (within limits) to train and work with them, and is tolerant of their need for casual and irregular attachment. And though not necessarily by design, the secondary labor market is perhaps the major employer of young, minority, inner-city workers. Thus we can build on an existing "fit," rather than create new structures.

Available evidence suggests that youth work willingly, and that they value the ability to obtain income, the sense of independence, and the personal responsibility derived from working (Mortimer and Finch, 1992; Cress, 1992; Yamoor and Mortimer, 1990; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1981). Additional benefits accrue from working in the secondary labor market,

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[9] This trend is reflected in data on community college students enrolled in specific vocational skill training programs, whose average age has increased from the early 20s to 29 to 32 years old.

where youth generally have choices about where to work (though the choices may be fundamentally similar). In the secondary labor market, many youth have some control over their hours and schedules and can leave a job when necessary or convenient.

A second argument for enriching secondary labor market jobs for young people is based on the connection between work experience and youth development. The past decade (and most particularly the past three or four years) has seen growing consensus that young people, if they are to move successfully through adolescence, must become competent in reaching a series of interconnected milestones. These include the following, which have been reiterated in a wide range of both academic research and practical wisdom (cf. Gambone, 1993; Mortimer and Finch, 1992; Stern et al., 1990; Pittman and Wright, 1991):

- Social and interpersonal skills;
- Cognitive and mental skills, particularly "higher-order" thinking and problem-solving abilities;
- The capacity to understand, appreciate and plan for the future;
- The ability to take on responsibilities;
- Integration of both career understanding and vocational knowledge.

To reach these milestones, youth require a variety of rich, mutually reinforcing, and challenging experiences in the everyday contexts in which they mature (Kegan et al., 1992). Work experience, if appropriately structured, is one context that can act as a catalyst of such development. The most important developmental benefit of early work experience is the perceived capacity to use one's skills and abilities (e.g., Mortimer and Finch, 1992; Stern et al., 1990). When youth have the opportunity to use their cognitive skills, believe they have the opportunity to learn from their jobs, and develop good relationships with adults at work, they are increasingly likely to develop a commitment to high standards at work (Stern et al., 1990), are more likely to value work (Mortimer and Finch, 1992), and are less likely to develop cynicism about the world of work (Stern et al., 1990). Youth's sense of "competency and efficacy is (also) fostered by having work that enables advancement opportunities and that is perceived as being rewarded well" (Mortimer and Finch, 1992:31).

Although there is little empirical evidence that relates the characteristics of high school students' work to their subsequent performance in the labor market or further education, analyses of longitudinal data clearly support the value of high-quality work experience to personal development. Research consistently finds that students who report greater opportunities in their high school jobs average higher wages than other youth in the first few years after high school (Stern et al., 1994; Mortimer and Finch, 1992; Stern and Nakata, 1989; Meyer and Wise, 1982; D'Amico and Baker, 1984; Steel, 1991).

Viewed from this "developmental" perspective, secondary labor market jobs, as they naturally occur, give youth only limited help in attaining these milestones; their contribution at best is circumscribed. Indeed, these jobs, especially when they involve more than 20 hours per week, may make negative contributions by fostering poor habits or attitudes about work and the workplace; increasing substance abuse and delinquency; and keeping youth from greater involvement in school (Steinberg et al., 1993; Bachman and Schulenberg, 1993; Mortimer and Finch, 1992; Stern et al., 1990; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986).

It seems clear that there are two distinct but overlapping goals, toward whose attainment secondary labor market jobs could be strategically used:

1. To further youth development. Research suggests that the quality of a youngster's work experience is only partly a function of whether the job is "entry-level" or something different (Cress, 1992; Gambone, 1993; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986). It would appear that a range of less tangible factors are also pivotal: the kind (and amount) of adult interest and support the youth receives; the opportunity to show and take initiative on the job; the degree and quality of reinforcement of academic skills, including opportunities to use them in the context of the job; and recognition of and feedback on the youth's performance.

Not all these factors fit comfortably in the framework of all secondary labor market jobs, but a good many do. These jobs would be appreciably more attractive and developmentally better suited to youth than ordinary entry-level jobs if individual employers and workplaces could be supplemented or modified in order to provide more frequent--and more supportive--adult supervision, better connections to youth's academic work, more (though necessarily still limited) opportunities for youth to work independently and flexibly, and enriched feedback about their performance. While this seems likely to hold true for all youth, it seems particularly relevant for younger youth and academically disadvantaged students--for whom adult interest, institutional support and reinforcement of the value of schooling are major underpinnings as they progress through high school.

2. To support transitions to stable long-term employment. As currently structured, most segments of the secondary labor market offer limited advancement opportunities, few long-term, stable employment prospects, and even fewer connections to attractive careers. The reward of working in these jobs is often purely monetary and short-term (Stern and Nakata, 1989; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986; Charner and Fraser, 1984). Incentives to remain in them are low. Not surprisingly, among many youth, secondary labor market jobs are often viewed with disdain; older youth--and particularly those out of school--are likely to drop out of the labor force rather than continue in a job (or succession of jobs) that has no apparent future.

By contrast, youth who, because of other supports or pathways to future careers, view their jobs as transitional--i.e., routes to long-term career prospects--may find them tolerable and worthwhile even if they involve relatively low-paying, low-skill work (Mortimer and Finch, 1992). Recapturing the stepping-stone nature of jobs in the secondary labor market and

reviving their "transitional" dimension is thus an important, though elusive goal. The following chapter postulates what a revitalized secondary labor market job would look like, and discusses the feasibility and structures that would be needed to create such jobs.

IV. WORK EXPERIENCE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Because so many youth and young adults work in the secondary labor market, it is incumbent on those responsible for developing school-to-work policy to consider using that context more effectively. This chapter outlines what a more constructive secondary labor market work experience would entail, the feasibility of using the workplace for adolescent and career development, and national trends and developments that might expedite these efforts. The chapter also delineates the incentives for private-sector employer participation in initiatives designed to upgrade secondary labor market jobs, and suggests how such initiatives dovetail with broader efforts to upgrade American workplaces. It ends with a brief discussion of the implications contemporary changes in policy focus, workplace organization and skill assessment have for implementation of the national school-to-work initiative.

ENRICHED WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET

Evidence does exist (Charner and Fraser, 1984; Wildavsky, 1989; Dienhart, 1991; Cress, 1992)--and more is emerging (Newman and Stack, 1992)--that young workers in secondary labor market jobs can gain more than short-term economic benefits from their work. Overall, young employees display a strong work ethic and desire for additional education and upward mobility. Leidner (1993) acknowledged that surprising levels of worker satisfaction were found even at the much maligned McDonald's. Moreover, stigma and reputation to the contrary notwithstanding, fast food jobs do enable youth to learn important basic employment skills.

In the first major survey of youth workers, Charner and Fraser (1984:55, 62, 64), found that:

> The vast majority of hourly employees learned how to operate a cash register, food preparation machines, and other machines . . . nine out of ten feel that their job taught them the skills associated with food preparations . . . seven out of ten developed skills related to training . . . almost half learned supervisory skills, and four out of ten learned inventory control.
>
> Fast food employees also learn other employability skills . . . dealing with customers; taking directions; getting along with co-workers; being on time; being dependable; being well groomed; managing their own money; saving for what is wanted; and getting along on a certain amount of money.
>
> Moreover, younger employees, minority employees, lower socioeconomic background employees, less schooled employees, all seem to get more out of these jobs than others.

Strengthening secondary labor market jobs would require building on these existing benefits, and developing structures and supports to further youth development and facilitate transitions

to long-term, stable employment. Specifically, more constructive work experience in the secondary labor market might evolve by:

- Adding more varied tasks and skill requirements to the work itself, to encourage greater use of school-taught academic skills and more on-the-job learning of competencies valued by the industry and reflected in industry-based SCANS standards. (A detailed discussion on the centrality of skill standards appears later in this chapter.)

- Modifying supervisory practices to encourage personal growth and skill development through greater coaching, assessment, feedback and certification of skills attained.

- Where appropriate, planning a sequence of work experiences over two to four years--with the same or different employers--in order to broaden and deepen both personal growth and skill development.

- Providing external supports that include some combination of case management, career guidance, remedial education, life skills training and other services, including the opportunity for regular reflection on and integration of work-based learning experiences.

- Advice on future career plans, which might include entering full-time employment that could lead to a career, finishing high school or obtaining a G.E.D., and/or moving on to postsecondary education in a four-year college, a two-year technical institute or community college, or a higher-level skills certification program.[10]

THE FEASIBILITY OF ENHANCING WORK IN THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET

One course of action suggested by our study is to consider pragmatic yet innovative strategies that would leverage changes in the secondary labor market to produce more challenging and developmentally appropriate work opportunities for youth. However, creating positive workplace experiences is a complex and provocative task that hinges on employer-related factors at both the national and individual employer levels.

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[10] Consistent findings on the economic returns of higher education underscore the importance of appropriate academic and career guidance. Most recently, Murnane, Willett, and Levy found that from 1979 to 1989, the earnings of 25- to 34-year-old males who graduated from high school but did not go to college declined 15 percent. When compared with the relatively stable earnings of young male college graduates during this decade, the college/high school wage differential grew from 16 percent to 43 percent (Murnane, Willett, and Levy cited in Osterman and Iannozzi, 1993). Yet the quality of career guidance disadvantaged youth receive through the public education system remains poor (Allum, 1993).

Feasibility Issues at the National Level

In the current wave of school reform, the school-to-work concept has generated widespread interest and concern among employer groups, unions, foundations, government, policy analysts, educators and reformers interested in building "Americanized" versions of the European-style "apprenticeship" programs. These initiatives have become a centerpiece of the current administration's human capital approach. If successful, they could lead to sweeping changes in the way the public and private sectors collaborate to prepare young people for the workplace.

While some observers have found potential drawbacks (e.g., early tracking, inflexibility) in the European school-to-work systems (Vickers, 1994; National Council of La Raza, 1993), they agree that their strongest feature is the high degree of coordination and cooperation among employers, unions, employees, government, schools and other training institutions (Lynch, 1993). In these systems, it is understood that the process of preparing adolescents for the workplace is a joint responsibility of schools and employers (Vickers, 1994; Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993; Lynch, 1993)

The essential elements of an effective European school-to-work system are industry-based occupational skill standards (which drive the systems); school curricula attuned to these standards; and structured and institutionalized means to ensure that work-based learning experiences exist in adequate numbers and are intimately linked to the standards and curricula.

These structured and institutionalized means rely on staffed entities under employer influence or control. They set the standards and assemble, design and monitor work-based learning experiences in places of (largely) private employment, as well as managing mechanisms to share or subsidize the costs of such programs. The many Americans who have made pilgrimages to Europe in recent years almost universally observe that this degree and nature of employer involvement is at the heart of these systems' success (cf. Glover and Weisberg, 1994).

American employers, however, are not sufficiently well-organized to play the role required to create workplace-based learning opportunities. Thus, not surprisingly, there is inadequate employer "ownership" of the new school-to-work programs. For example, the nascent "youth apprenticeship" pilots are being promoted largely by nonprofits who implore schools and employers to do the right thing for youth and the community in the name of enlightened, long-term self-interest. However, the European experience argues instead for the creation of an American version of employer-influenced or controlled, staffed entities that can strategically organize the employer side of the labor market to these ends.

Individual Employer Constraints

In an effort to better understand the challenges and constraints faced by individual firms, P/PV conducted two focus group sessions with local employers. Reflecting national demographic profiles within the secondary labor market, these supervisors were mainly under the age of 40, with fast food supervisors all under 30 years old. In this section, we draw heavily on the information obtained from the 12 front-line supervisors who participated in these two-hour group sessions.

Based on this information, we learned that the typical local private employer in the secondary labor market manages a high-volume, low-margin business consistently faced with high turnover among predominantly youthful workers; is pressed to keep wages in line (but competitive); and responds to short stays by casual employees by hiring replacements from a constant pool of applicants, training them minimally and replacing them when they leave.

The secondary labor market is among the most autonomous segments of our free-market economy; the employers' perspective is strongly laissez-faire. They are cautious (if not suspicious) of external initiatives that might add to their burden, complicate their relationships with employees or negatively affect the working conditions for which they are responsible. Above all, they view their central responsibility as an economic one: to conduct their business efficiently and profitably.

In our focus groups with front-line secondary labor market supervisors, time and money were the two constraints identified consistently: they inform almost every choice concerning how business is conducted, who will be trained, how they will be trained, and whether workplace improvements will be implemented. These supervisors reported having little authority to make decisions, spend money, or vary from established policy or work routines without corporate approval. However, provided it is sanctioned by their district managers, anything that would result in bottom-line improvements is welcome. In this regard, one positive finding was that most participants ranked employee development as the highest priority among six proposed work force improvements--which included mentoring, certification and supervisor training.

Tentative conclusions drawn from our reconnaissance work with secondary labor market employers (Novak, 1994) and reinforced by research and assessments of business-school collaborations (Lynn and Wills, 1994; Pauly, Kopp and Haimson, 1994), suggest that private employers can be attracted to participate in novel enterprises. However, their involvement must be secured and managed with great care.

Large-scale voluntary initiatives that involved private employers in an intensive manner similar to that described here have been relatively few.[11] This fact alone suggests that efforts must be carefully thought-through and field-tested; and that expectations should be modest, particularly in the early going. Before they sign on, employers will need to be convinced that these initiatives can succeed. Employers must see clearly how an initiative will benefit them, preferably in the short-run. This suggests issues of both substance (the actual benefits that accrue to the business), and communication (how well a project is packaged and presented to employers).

We have found that reducing turnover rates is a powerful motivator for many employers. Focus group participants from the fast food industry, especially, ranked employee turnover as their highest concern among five common workplace challenges. In working with employers, it is crucial to both address turnover explicitly, and make clear how participation will lower it. For many employers, the public relations value of participating in an initiative that serves youth will hold strong appeal; that dimension must also be emphasized.

It will also be essential to provide incentives that offset direct costs employers might need to assume. Because anticipated benefits are fairly long-term or uncertain, the relationship between wage subsidies and youth employment is complicated. Therefore, incentives to ease the monetary burden for employers must be carefully crafted.

Recent efforts to stimulate job creation through wage subsidies have had mixed results (e.g., Bishop and Montgomery, 1993), but there is evidence indicating wage subsidies can enhance naturally occurring jobs. For example, Katz and Krueger (1992), in their study of the impact of recent minimum wage increases on the employment of workers in the fast food industry, found that few firms used the subminimum/training wage for their new hires. While employers expressed concern about the inequity of paying teenagers different wages, it appears they found the increased paperwork of applying for and administering the subminimum wage even more troubling (Lynch, 1993). In any initiative or demonstration project, it will be essential to minimize intrusion and rules, and to handle data collection and information-sharing in novel ways.

Finally, experience indicates that the time commitments and involvement of employers must be limited and well-defined. Lynn and Wills' study (1994) of cooperative education plans found that while written training plans existed, their lack of explicit guidelines for supervision and training led many employers to ignore them. Our reconnaissance suggests that managers in secondary labor market settings (who make most employment decisions) have demanding.

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[11] The most notable of these was the Youth Entitlement Project (YEP), which offered part-time work to large numbers of disadvantaged youth in a number of communities in the late 1970s. Although the initiative failed to increase educational attainment, it was successfully operated and provided many new job opportunities for youth. YEP proved that it is possible to identify and work effectively with a large number of local employers in urban communities.

hectic schedules. Many report that they would like to do more with their young employees, but have no time. Thus, motivated managers need support, not further burdens.

Potential Benefits for Employers

The picture that emerges from P/PV's exploration of secondary labor market employers is a complex but promising one that offers hope even as substantial unknowns remain. Based on the feedback received in the focus group sessions, the interests of employer and employee overlap considerably; both could benefit from creating more opportunities for taking responsibility and developing skills at even the lowest levels of work. Our reconnaissance suggests four factors that might predispose the employer community to participate in initiatives that provide more support for youth:

- First, all these employers have a vested interest in young workers. In many cases, their overall operations and employment strategies depend on youth, for whom they compete energetically. As individual employers, they stand to benefit if they can find ways to make their workplaces more attractive to young employees.

- These employers are often sensitive about their image as offering "dead-end" jobs. First, it impairs their capacity to recruit and retain workers. Second, many perceive themselves as both contributing and dependent members of their local communities, and would prefer a more positive image. Indeed, in recent studies of school-to-work pilot projects (Pauly, Kopp and Haimson, 1994; Lynn and Wills, 1994), employers cited a sense of corporate responsibility or commitment to helping their communities as major reasons for participating.

- Turnover is a serious, pervasive problem for these employers, particularly at the entry level in fast-food restaurants where rates often exceed 300 percent. Since it is costly (in terms of training and recruitment costs), and disruptive to scheduling--and thus affects profits--employers are particularly open to ideas about how turnover can be lowered.

- Several prominent employers, both at the national and local levels, have undertaken initiatives that seek to reduce turnover among young workers and strengthen their school connections.[12] These initiatives are uneven in quality and by no means widespread. Yet they signal a willingness to experiment, and to modify the traditional relationship employers have maintained with young, entry-level workers. This represents an openness that can be carefully built upon.

Employers' predispositions to action are likely to be magnified and further spread by the shift toward high-performance workplaces now on the economic horizon. These workplaces,

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[12] Among the most prominent of these employers are Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonald's Corp., ServiceStar, ServiceMaster, Taco Bell, Wal-Mart and Wegman's Supermarkets.

spreading throughout the private sector, are finding favor in the administration, and have served as an impetus for the national policy emphasis on human capital development.

THE SECONDARY LABOR MARKET AND HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORKPLACES

There is growing consensus that employees must be educated and trained to adapt to changing work environments where demands for quality, variety, customization, convenience and timeliness of delivery are intensifying. Market analysts increasingly assert that front-line and front-of-the-house workers must be more responsible for identifying and solving problems, as well as more responsive to customer needs (Schlesinger and Hallowell, 1991; Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991b; Roach, 1991). Therefore, an increase in the knowledge, skills and ability levels of all workers--especially those on the front line--is crucial to achieve success in the emerging high-performance, high quality service work organization (Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1993).

The 1991 report of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) delineated several facets of what it called "tomorrow's workplace." The report predicts that the workplace of tomorrow will be fundamentally different in organization and design than the one with which we are familiar. To succeed in the new global marketplace, the new paradigm argues, high-wage nations can continue to earn higher wages only by producing the highest quality goods and services--providing greater customer choice, more flexible production and automated systems that are more complex and efficient than those operating in low-wage countries.

Therefore, in order to successfully compete, contemporary businesses must improve quality, production, and customer and worker satisfaction. Over the past decade, forward-looking organizations have moved toward what has been termed "high-performance work." In contrast to the traditional model, the guiding principle of this system is to reduce bureaucracy by giving authority over a wide range of tasks to those on the front line. Thus, management layers are diminished as front-line workers must rely on their own judgement to make decisions. The implications for front-line employees is clear. They will be called on to perform an increasing array of complicated tasks that will require the application of skills that have heretofore been expected only of the top tier of executives and managers.

This type of work reorganization requires a significant reinvestment in education and training. To function in the high-performance workplace, front-line workers will need an education that develops higher-order thinking skills. They need to be skilled to perform a wider variety of tasks and assume increasing responsibilities. Likewise, supervisors will need to learn innovative styles of management. As front-line workers learn to supervise themselves and monitor their own work, middle-level managers will be expected to adopt the role of coach and mentor, share information with workers, and concentrate on professional and human development (Rhode Island Skills Commission, 1992:9-10).

Even in the secondary labor market, particularly the fast-food industry--where the largest number of young people enter the work force--there are hints of movement toward high-performance workplaces. A handful of corporations, with Taco Bell in the forefront, have begun to embrace the concepts of high performance. The preliminary results have been astonishing.

By using modern technology to empower instead of control, delayering management, selecting workers carefully and organizing them into well-trained teams, Taco Bell's company-owned stores are now largely run by worker teams without old-style supervision on site. Store managers have been elevated to area managers charged with supporting several store teams. Sales growth has exceeded 60 percent, profits are up 25 percent, prices have been cut 25 percent, workers take home more than the industry average (with more increases to come), crew turnover is down 29 percent, manager turnover down as much as 50 percent, and the remaining managers can earn more than twice the industry average (Schlesinger and Hallowell, 1991).

However, is this the fast food industry's future? Is it "the" solution to the deficiencies of the secondary labor market at large? Such transformational changes are extraordinarily difficult for most organizations to adopt. Traditionalists argue that the nature of the product, process, materials, technology and financing often prohibit such approaches; more often, however, it is management's culture and mind-set that resist change. The hiring criteria for workers in high-performance organizations can be selective, requiring certain mentalities and skills not always found in young secondary labor market employees. For all these reasons, high-performance systems with superior performance "numbers" as stunning as those cited for the new Taco Bell have yet to penetrate a third of American firms (Osterman, 1993).

In short, such transformations, while welcome and well worth studying and promoting, are rare. They have appeared thus far in few sectors of the secondary labor market, where competitive pressures are most intense. Under current conditions, their progress is likely to remain slow. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that the vast majority of the millions of workers in the secondary labor market will still be locked into dead-end, low-paying jobs a decade or two from now unless steps are taken to augment and expedite the transformation process.

Proponents and critical observers agree that achieving high performance depends equally on establishing new work systems and increasing the skill levels of workers--particularly entry-level workers. Therefore, developing effective mechanisms for identifying, assessing, documenting and certifying those skills is a critical prerequisite.

THE CENTRALITY OF SKILLS AND SKILL STANDARDS

For years, both academic and occupational skill standards have been central to recommendations for reforms in education and training. In 1990's *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*, the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce dramatically articulated

these growing concerns by recommending that certificates of mastery be developed, based on benchmarks of skill and academic performance. And in its reports, the SCANS Commission explicitly defined workplace competencies in terms of functional and enabling skills necessary to succeed in high-performance jobs. (See SCANS Appendix.) The national education goals developed by the nation's governors likewise emphasize the need for national standards and assessments.

These earlier recommendations have prompted federal action. The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, signed by the President on March 31, will help create the national standards around which education and training programs can be designed. Most recently, the School to Work Opportunities Act will help develop programs that link education and employment for young workers.

Skill Standards

By identifying the levels needed to successfully perform within an occupational cluster, standards of performance can be tailored to a specific industry or cut across industry lines. Broadly defined skill standards provide a framework for ensuring that workers have the portable skills necessary to make value-added contributions on the job and move easily up a career ladder or from one career to another (cf. Wills, 1993a; Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1993). When skill standards are connected to educational curricula and training programs, as is the ultimate goal of the School to Work Opportunities Act, they will serve to create a system of lifelong learning opportunities with certificates of mastery and competency that are recognized and accepted by employers nationally and internationally (Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1993).

Advocates (e.g., Hoachlander and Rahn, 1994) claim national skill standards will help to secure:

- Greater worker mobility and portability of credentials;
- Higher wages, greater employment security and more job opportunities;
- More efficient recruitment, screening and placement;
- Clearer goals and direction for students;
- More consistent, targeted instruction;
- Greater accountability by education and training providers;
- Higher-quality products and services; and
- Higher consumer confidence and satisfaction.

The Department of Labor has promoted a national system of occupational skill standards that would aid all the major constituencies in the labor market: new entrants to the work force, educators and trainers aiming to prepare students better for future work, employers hoping to improve work force performance, and workers looking for ways to improve their skills.

Critics, on the other hand, contend that there is little evidence that a system of national standards will produce these benefits (Heckman et al., 1993). A set of unresolved questions do remain, including: What constitutes an industry? Should the focus be on occupations or occupational clusters? At what specific levels? Is a national system intended to certify entry-level work only or address the higher level skills needed to progress in a career? (Hoachlander and Rahn, 1994:20).

Even if the system is limited to entry-level positions, there are competing viewpoints. One school of thought, which is represented by the SCANS, argues for a generic approach that focuses on skills needed in all jobs. At the other extreme are efforts to develop very specific skills for narrowly defined industries or occupations (e.g., air conditioning and refrigeration or metalworking; cf. Hoachlander and Rahn, 1994:21). These seem less helpful in the context of a national school-to-work endeavor.

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)

In 1990, the Secretary of Labor appointed the SCANS to determine what skills are needed to survive in the workplace, the acceptable levels of proficiency and the most effective means of measuring these skills. The Commission made several recommendations for how schools and workplaces could be reorganized to foster work-based learning and prepare students for work in the 21st century. (See Appendix B.)

It appears evident that SCANS sought to define the skills that would constitute a "Certificate of Initial Mastery," an idea originally proposed by the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. A Certificate of Initial Mastery would certify that the bearer was qualified in all of the basic skills needed to work in the modern workplace and was prepared to pursue either a college-prep curriculum or one leading to a "Certificate of Mastery" in a specific skill or technical area. Thus, SCANS set out to define a generic framework of workplace skills needed for success in the workplaces of the present and near future--a framework that would shape thinking and action in the home, community, school, workplace and government.

In *What Work Requires of Schools* (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991) the SCANS Commission recommended a Three-Part Foundation of Basic Skills, Thinking Skills and Personal Qualities and Five Competencies (abilities to deal with resources, information, systems, technology and interpersonal issues). This framework is holistic--it includes traditional basic skills, personal qualities and the ability to use resources, especially information; thinking, interpersonal and teamwork skills newly emphasized in industry; and an understanding of the importance of systems and technology. (See Appendix B for more information on this framework.)

A number of cities and states have begun incorporating the SCANS framework into their education reform efforts (U.S. Department of Labor, 1993). The current administration has made the recommendations of the SCANS Commission central to its school-to-work policy. The Departments of Labor and Education have provided a set of grants to 22 employer groups as the first step in developing a "National Framework of Skill Standards and Certification"--explicit industry-based standards that include basic skills, such as those identified by SCANS.[13] These are discussed more fully later. Elsewhere, the major national testing bodies (i.e., College Entrance Examination Board, Educational Testing Service [ETS][14], American College Testing Service) are working on new types of assessments that can be used in the school and workplace.[15]

While few question whether the SCANS skills are desirable, we are a long way from knowing the level of skill required for different industries or occupations. Moreover, for some skills (e.g., resource management or teamwork), there are not yet accepted methods for measuring and evaluating level of proficiency. Indeed, during the SCANS hearings, Alice Irby, Vice President of ETS, stressed the need for basic research on work-related skills and how to test for them, since remarkably little is known about this topic.

Current Skill Standards Projects

Goals 2000: Educate America Act, enacted in March, establishes a structure that allows for continuous exchange of information among employers, workers, educators and trainers concerning the skills workers need and the skills they possess. Skill standards have been identified as the vehicle for this information exchange (Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1993).

This law calls for the creation of a National Skill Standards Board to oversee the development of the national system, representing business, labor, education and government. These standards are to be set and driven by partnerships of employers, organized labor, educators and job incumbents. The Board's most fundamental tasks will be building consensus across occupational clusters and industries on what common necessary skills entry-level employees need, and developing a common nomenclature for communicating such information. Skill

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[13] Two of the DOL grants for developing industry standards were awarded to the retail industry and the hospitality industry, whose bottom sectors dominate the secondary labor market.

[14] In a report for the National Assessment Governing Board, Ina Mullis (1993:2), executive director of ETS's Center for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), stated that, "Despite numerous complexities, it would be possible for NAEP to directly assess SCANS and other workplace competencies. NAEP could use its consensus process, making sure that employers were well-represented, to develop a framework for a work-readiness assessment, and conduct such an assessment, much as it does in reading and writing."

[15] See American College Testing Service (1993), which describes assessment measures for identifying job competencies and skills that are common across occupations.

standards explicate the critical linkages between school-based knowledge and workplace know-how.

Specifying skill standards is not a new activity; certification programs have a long history in the United States. For example, national trade associations, such as those representing building contractors or welders, and professional organizations, such as the Certified Public Accountants, Federal Aviation Association and unions with registered apprenticeship programs, all have their own sets of skill standards and certification systems. Most states have licensing and certification standards for selected occupations, such as nursing, teaching or cosmetology.

Indeed, more than 170 certification programs have been identified by the Education Department's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. However, with a few notable exceptions, these programs are not national in scope, and therefore have little influence on entry into or advancement in national labor markets. Consequently, they have weak links to educational curricula and instruction.

To strengthen these links and develop a more comprehensive system of national skill standards, the Departments of Labor and Education awarded 22 grants to business, labor and education committees in a variety of industries and occupations. (See Table 2.) Ranging from 18 months to three years, these projects seek to pilot-test skill standards and certification schemes and inform development of a national policy framework in this area. The solicitation distributed by the Labor Department called for grantees to "incorporate where valid the competencies developed by SCANS" (U.S. Department of Labor, 1993:C-4).

The American Electronics Association (AEA) was the first to unveil its standards in a report released February 25, 1994. (See Olson, 1994d.) Secretary of Labor Robert Reich claimed that this and subsequent guides that emerge from this set of projects will help reshape the relationship between businesses and schools.[16] Employers will eventually view a skill certificate as an intermediary credential between a high school diploma and a college degree.

Complementing these projects are several related national activities. The Advisory Panel for the Dictionary of Occupational Titles has recommended adoption of a comprehensive content model. This model seeks to define for each new occupational title a set of five skill categories that become increasingly more specific.[17]

Also under way are efforts to establish national curriculum standards in the basic academic disciplines of mathematics, science, English and social studies. However, these projects have

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[16] Reich, however, focuses on the high-tech nature of these jobs, especially since the first ones came from the AEA.

[17] The skill categories are: aptitudes and abilities; workplace basic skills; cross-functional skills; operation-specific skills; occupation-specific knowledge (Hoachlander and Rahn, 1994).

Table 2

THE NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS PROJECTS

INDUSTRY	FUNDED BY	GRANTEE
Agriscience/Biotechnology	Dept. of Ed.	National FFA Foundation, 5632 Mt. Vernon Highway, Box 15160, Alexandria VA 22309; (703) 360-3600. Contact: Jeff Moss
Air Conditioning, Refrigeration & Power	Dept. of Ed.	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, VTECS, 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur GA 30033; (800) 248-7701. Contact: Victor Harville
Automotive, Auto Body & Truck Technologies	Dept. of Ed.	National Automotive Technical Education Foundation, 13505 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon VA 22071; (703) 713-3800. Contact: Pat Lundquist
Biotechnical Sciences	Dept. of Ed.	Education Development Center, 55 Chapel St., Newton MA 02160; (617) 969-7100. Contact: Judith Leff
Chemical Process Industries	Dept. of Ed.	American Chemical Society/EDC, 1155 16th St. NW, Washington DC 20036; (202) 872-8734. Contact: Kenneth Chapman
Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) and Design	Dept. of Ed.	Foundation for Industrial Modernization, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 1500, North Tower, Washington DC 20004-1703; (202) 662-8970. Contact: Jane Beardsworth
Electronics (Consumer)	Dept. of Ed.	Electronic Industries Association, 919 18th St., Washington DC 20006; (202) 955-5814. Contact: Irv Kaplan
Food Marketing Industry (supermarket)	Dept. of Ed.	National Grocers Association, 1825 Samuel Morse Drive, Reston VA 22090; (703) 437-5300. Contact: James Williams
Advanced Manufacturing	Dept. of Ed.	Production and Manufacturing Foundation for Industrial Modernization. (For address, see CAD above.) Contact: Sally O'Dowd
Hazardous Materials Management Technician	Dept. of Ed.	CORD, 601C Lake Air Drive, P.O. Box 21689, Waco TX 76710; (817) 772-8756. Contact: Dan Hull
Health Science and Technology	Dept. of Ed.	Far West Laboratory, 730 Harrison St., San Francisco CA 94107; (415) 565-3070. Contact: Sri Anada

Table 2 - (continued)

THE NATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS PROJECTS

INDUSTRY	FUNDED BY	GRANTEE
Heavy Highway/Utility Construction	Dept. of Ed.	Laborers-AGC Ed. & Training Fund, 37 Deerfield Road, P.O. Box 37, Pomfret Center CT 06259; (203) 974-0800. Contact: James Warren
Human Service Occupations	Dept. of Ed.	Human Services Research Institute/EDC, 2336 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge MA 02140; (617) 876-0426. Contact: Valerie Bradley
Phototonics Technician	Dept. of Ed.	CORD (For address, see Hazardous Materials.)
Printing	Dept. of Ed.	The Graphic Arts Technical Foundation, 4615 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15213-3796; (412) 621-6941. Contact John Burgess
Welding Occupations	Dept. of Ed.	American Welding Society, 550 NW Lejeune Road, Miami FL 33126; (305) 443-0353. Contact: Nelson Wall
Electronics	Dept. of Labor	American Electronics Association, 5201 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara CA; (408) 987-4200. Contact: Cheryl Fields Tyler
Electrical Construction	Dept. of Labor	National Electrical Contractors, 3 Bethesda Metro Center, Bethesda MD; (301) 657-3110. Contact: Charles Kelly
Uniform Services and Textiles	Dept. of Labor	Uniform Services and Textiles Association, 1730 M St. NW, Washington DC 20036; (202) 296-6744. Contact: Geoffry Northey
Metalworking	Dept. of Labor	National Tool and Machining Association, 9300 Livingston Road, Ft. Washington MD 20744; (301) 248-6200. Contact: William Ruxton
Retail Trade	Dept. of Labor	National Retail Federation, Washington DC 20004; (202) 783-7971. Contact: Robert Hall
Tourism, Travel and Hospitality	Dept. of Labor	Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1200 17th St. NW, Washington DC 20036; (202) 331-5990. Contact: Doug Adair

not, for the most part, made direct connections to work situations or students' career prospects (Hoachlander and Rahn, 1994).

Educational Testing Service (ETS) and American College Testing Program (ACT), the two leading organizations responsible for the development and administration of national academic standardized tests, are currently engaged in developing systems to assess the proficiencies that come closest to matching the cognitive tasks of the workplace. In 1993, ACT undertook The National Job Analysis Study (American College Testing Program, 1993:ii), "designed to empirically identify workplace behaviors common across occupations and linked to employee success in 'high performance' organizations." ACT has already released WORK KEYS, its first version of a skill assessment package that can be applied in both school and work settings (American College Testing Program, 1993). Additionally, ETS in collaboration with the National Alliance of Business (NAB) has embarked on a new initiative called WORKLINK, which involves a high-technology information tracking system designed to improve the reporting of students' achievement in school, training and work to potential employers in business and industry.

IMPLICATIONS OF SKILL STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL-TO-WORK STRATEGIES

Successful implementation of the school-to-work legislation hinges on substantial changes in the behavior of government, labor, the private sector and public education. However, in practice, given the initiatives on which they are to be based, these changes are likely to be circumscribed and incremental, and will require sustained effort to achieve. In short, the vision is clear, but the pathways are limited and uncertain.

Yet, parallel but untapped opportunities to effect potentially profound change in the labor market exist, if perceived and wielded in an effective way. First, the standards movement can drive (and upgrade) industry training, industrywide assessment and certification procedures, and reform of such ingrained employer practices as job-design and supervisory roles, as well as educational reform and school-based learning. These objectives, all aimed at improving customer service and competitive effectiveness, are clearly among the top goals of both the SCANS and the standards development task forces now at work in the retail, hospitality and other industries.

Second, developments in skill assessment and workplace transformation appear to dovetail with the school-to-work agenda, which calls for making work experiences more developmentally effective for high school students on work assignment. Given the dubious characteristics and constraints that typify jobs in the youth labor market, even limited improvements in the nature and organization of work in these settings can have positive implications for the youth who find their initial work experiences there. This is perhaps even more true for marginal students and youth who have dropped out of school, as both of these groups are unlikely to be initial targets of current school-to-work initiatives.

With this background in mind, we are confronted with the following policy/program question: Is it reasonable to assume that youth could gain transferable employability skills in entry-level jobs, have those skills documented in such a way that they could receive certification of skill attainment, and actually become certified in such a way that future employers would recognize those skills and therefore offer those youth more demanding and challenging positions with commensurate increases in compensation? Our reconnaissance and analysis lead us to answer with a tentative and cautious yes. The final chapter offers recommendations and suggests initiatives that may help guide future activities.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED INITIATIVES

The present wave of policy interest in the school-to-work transition is peaking at the highest level since early in this century, reflecting the pressures that have rendered no longer tolerable a number of deficiencies in our education and training systems.

The emergence of a world economy characterized by intense competition has generated demands for a well-educated and trained work force; at the same time, American school-to-work systems have been characterized as grossly inadequate in comparison to those of some of our economic competitors. Analytical evidence suggests this competitive challenge cannot be met through marginal reforms of either the educational or the mass production system, but instead indicates the need for a broad range of changes in the organization of work.

As a result, new forms of high-performance work organizations have begun to emerge that combine advanced technology with a new social organization of work requiring higher-order skills. Simultaneously, an unprecedented movement to create and promote occupational skill standards and educational goals has attained national prominence. This movement has been propelled by educators' and employers' desire for a common language they can use to crystallize and promote their activities.

Meanwhile, on the education front, recent research on the processes of cognition have been hailed for reviving the power and value of "learning by doing" and "exploring in a situated context." Such innovations should benefit young students and workers who are often unprepared to advance to the primary labor market because they fail to gain necessary skills in school and in their early work experience.

As summarized by the Council of Chief State School Officers and American Youth Policy Forum in *Building a System to Connect School and Employment* (1994:38):

> Our workforce suffers not only from a dearth of sufficiently skilled workers but often from a limited demand for high skilled workers among U.S. companies that continue to organize work in ways dependent upon low-skill jobs. Hence, our charge is a complex one--to establish skill standards for employees at world-class levels, infuse these standards into our institutions and training programs, and promote the existence of environments that nurture and develop high-performance work.

The youth-related response to these challenges has thus far centered on schooling. Yet, these challenges have grown and converged sufficiently to generate widespread concern among employer groups, unions, foundations, government, policy analysts and educators. With the climate receptive to change, it seems certain that the 1990s will see a range of national experiments and initiatives.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analyses suggest four major policy recommendations that could serve to guide future initiatives. Later in this chapter, we suggest several specific initiatives that embody the recommended elements.

1. The work side of the school-to-work transition should be more energetically pursued.

The most prominent dimension missing in current activities is the employer side of the school-to-work equation. Corporate and industry involvement has barely been represented in the reform movement to date. The same may be said of labor unions as representatives of those currently in the work force.[18] This is especially odd because the centerpiece of the school-to-work reform movement, stimulated by comparisons to European systems, is almost always some form of "work-based learning," occurring, presumably, on a job.

The industry-driven nature of training for young people in European countries is its distinguishing feature. By contrast, vocational education in the United States is almost entirely a school-based enterprise. While the School to Work Opportunities Act emphasizes workplace learning and connections to business partners, it provides no clear incentive for employers, whose cooperation is essential to any serious reform. In short, the current federal initiative may perpetuate a system that continues to be school-dominated.

In the United States, there is a natural resistance to an overly strong federal role in the workplace, and direct federal intervention is likely to fail to the extent it is perceived by business to be intrusive or regulatory. Still, we cannot continue to count on corporate goodwill or enlightened self-interest alone to motivate employer activity to enhance work-based learning.

We believe the federal government can provide political leadership and economic incentives to encourage businesses to increase training initiatives for young entry-level workers--for example, by subsidizing apprentice-like work experiences or providing tax incentives to firms for providing enhanced work-based learning activities. In addition, through the new Office of the American Workplace, DOL can spearhead an intensive federal effort to develop quality business practices that include making sure job training strategies match what businesses require. This new initiative can provide public support to business efforts that seek to tap the skill and initiative of front-line workers.

Because the new office is expected to work closely with the Employment and Training Administration, there will be opportunities for substantial coordination. Moreover, efforts to

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[18] Unions have expressed concern over the term "youth apprenticeship" as a cooption of their registered apprenticeships found largely in the building and metal-working trades. As a result, unions tend to support two versions of school-to-work efforts: (1) those that are strictly school-based and don't intrude on the workplace; and (2) those that, if work-based, allow for the upgrading of all employees' skills, including those of well-established veterans.

more fully engage the private sector represent an important and logical opportunity to continue and to develop promising joint projects between the Departments of Education and Labor.

2. Opportunities to leverage naturally occurring work experiences that facilitate adolescents' personal and career development must be identified and exploited.

Strategies that exploit naturally occurring work opportunities will reach a large number and wide array of youth. Such strategies can build on youth's natural inclination to work by making their initial work experience developmentally positive and forward-looking.

Conventional wisdom and exploratory research suggest that learning does indeed occur in the workplace. Unless work-based learning experiences are deliberately designed for learning, however, they are likely to continue to exhibit serious inefficiencies, especially for the young and undereducated.

Under the banner of "work-based learning," vocational education has markedly increased its emphasis on experiential education. However, both the more recent youth apprenticeship projects and the older and larger cooperative education programs have had difficulty finding jobs for students and ensuring that the work experience, though low-paying, is "learning-rich" and not "just a job." Thoughtful research, program development, federal incentives and the cooperation of the private sector will be needed to overcome this obstacle.

In addition to enhanced work experience, youth need more awareness of the options that exist beyond the secondary labor market so they can develop relative plans for the future. The role of career guidance to provide youth with the tools to make clear and intelligent decisions in this regard cannot be understated. Disadvantaged youth may turn to the secondary labor market seeking pathways to self-sufficiency and responsible adulthood only to find limited opportunities for growth. There appears to be a definite need for more exploration into the ways career guidance can be offered to youth who have left the school system.

We can create a more integrated education and employment system by initiating efforts within the workplace and connecting them back to the schools and onward to better jobs and/or advanced training and education. Thus, the system should reflect the multitude of career paths individuals actually take (i.e., work-to-work or work-to-school), not simply the prototypical linear path implied in school-to-work.

3. Efforts to develop and recognize a full range of workplace certification techniques should be expanded.

The political climate in both education and policy circles appears to be moving away from a process-oriented approach to an outcome-oriented approach to youth preparation and training. Hence, attention is turning to a much broader educational issue--how to identify performance objectives (i.e., standards) and measure students' achievement of these standards.

With passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, it appears inevitable that some kind of national minimum skill standards will be set, and that all youth seeking to make the transition from schooling to employment will be required to meet these standards. Yet developing the mechanisms to authentically measure workplace know-how, creating a generalized credential and convincing a critical mass of businesses to recognize that credential will be serious challenges.

Establishing voluntary national standards for what workers should know and be able to do is central to the current administration's work force development agenda. Such standards would help shape the design of education and training programs, and provide youth and adults with a portable credential that would be widely recognized by employers.

Congress approved the creation of a national skill standards board this spring as part of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The board is charged with the critical tasks of identifying broad-based occupational clusters consistent with the needs of business and the promotion of high-performance work organizations, establishing a common nomenclature and framework, and encouraging industry-led coalitions to establish voluntary skill standards in a range of occupational fields. Just as the development of national standards in core academic subjects could help set targets for students' academic mastery, occupational and professional skill standards would attest to their technical competencies and work-readiness.

With guidance from employers and the national skill standards board, the competencies articulated by the SCANS, and, as they become available, the occupational skill standards now being developed in various industries could be used to: (1) analyze secondary labor market jobs for their skill content; (2) assess skill competencies in areas employers identify as critical to the job; and (3) through a credential, certify those competencies in ways credible to future employers and educators. Continued promotion of these strategies at the federal level will be essential to ensure that such a credential is honored across industries nationwide.

4. A wider range of attainable work-learning opportunities should be made available for disadvantaged youth.

The core programs identified as school-to-work models have heretofore been limited and selective, both in terms of the kinds of jobs they target and the kinds of young people they serve. For example, neo-apprenticeship programs are seldom established in the secondary labor market, but have typically been implemented in occupations where considerable skill development and investment in training are required, such as the machine trades.

This type of program will likely favor youth who perform well in school, and show both interest in and potential to benefit from a long-term, costly investment in training and education. Marginal students, and youth who have left school before graduating, are unlikely to find their way into these programs.

Therefore, efforts designed to build on the secondary labor market experience of youth should be recognized as an important part of the continuum of youth education and training programs. Large numbers of economically disadvantaged and academically at-risk youth are already present in the secondary labor market, and though not necessarily by design, the secondary labor market is perhaps the major employer of young, minority, inner-city workers.

Available evidence suggests that youth work willingly, and value the ability to obtain income, the sense of independence, and the personal responsibility derived from working. Furthermore, recent research has found that under certain conditions, significant developmental benefits accrue from secondary labor market experience. Given the potential that work experience can offer, and the vast number of youth who hold entry-level positions in the secondary labor market, it is encumbent on the public and private sectors to ensure these enhanced conditions exist for all working youth, not just the fortunate few.

INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The broad policy recommendations proposed in this report are unlikely to be accomplished through a single program, initiative or strategy. Our conclusion is that a set of interdependent demonstration projects should be undertaken over the next few years. Given the large and widespread changes required, the newness of the approach, and the number of issues about which further knowledge is needed (knowledge that in most cases can be developed only through demonstrations), such a variety of initiatives is necessary. However, their ultimate success will depend on changes in the behavior and operations of private-sector employers.

The projects described in this section are classified under three headings: community-centered strategies, national initiatives and research. The assumption is that the "community" and "national" activities depend strongly on one another, and should be undertaken together.

These initiatives are described in general terms. They are meant to be adaptable and expandable, so that with appropriate modifications, they could serve the differing needs of both younger and older adolescents, and both school-connected and out-of-school youngsters.

Community-Centered Strategies

For most young people, the natural process of attaining work experience and connecting to the secondary labor market happens at the local level, particularly among the employers in neighborhoods and communities where young people live. Locally based strategies and interventions are thus crucial for enhancing the developmental opportunities and supports that young workers accrue through their jobs, while helping employers retain young workers and enhance their job performance.

1. Supporting and Enriching Local Workplaces

This initiative would be based in well-defined neighborhoods in four to six communities. In each neighborhood, between 15 and 25 entry-level businesses would be invited to participate. They would agree to provide a set of supports to their young employees, including additional supervisory time (with the possibility of supervisors receiving specialized training in adolescent development topics); programs to recognize and reward positive job performance; strengthened interactions between schools and employers; and incentives for job retention and good school performance.

An employer might, for example, hire a senior citizen part time to get special training and work with five or six youth. Such an arrangement would be flexible and relatively inexpensive. The older worker, properly chosen and trained, could play an appreciable role as mentor and supervisor to a young person, as well as being an effective worker in his or her own right.

Management of the initiative would take place either through local community-based youth-serving organizations or schools (or, in an ideal :tting, a combination of the two). These would be selected particularly in light of past success in developing employer connections. Their staffs would receive training and ongoing technical assistance to develop and maintain the "network" of private employers; they would provide the needed administrative liaison and support, help solve problems, and be responsive to employer needs without being intrusive in their interactions.

Local organizations, whether CBOs or committed schools, would be natural "hubs" for a project of this kind. They know the youth, and could refer them to employers with whom they establish relationships. Their support and interest in the youngsters' job performance would serve both the youth's and employers' needs. Participating schools could serve as entry-level testers and trainers for employers. And with appropriate preparation, a CBO or school would be positioned to strengthen and expand the base of prospective local employers over time. See Appendix B for further details on this initiative.

2. Building on Summer Youth Employment

The community focus also provides opportunities to blend in an additional resource: the federal Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP). SYETP is a gateway program for poor youth, providing many with their first formal job. SYETP has shown its effectiveness as a vehicle for combining education with work, and making appreciable short-term differences for youngsters.

Ideally structured, summer work experiences should offer more than a simple introduction to the world of work. Summer employment could be organized so that youth

learn academic skills associated with their jobs. The foundation skills developed by SCANS could be used as a basis for making connections between learning and work.

One approach would be a sequence of summer employment, school activities and part-time work over several years. An effective sequence would maintain a focus on reinforcing educational attainment; provide continuity between different jobs and educational experiences; offer increasing challenge (and rewards) to youth; compile information about skill attainments; and, in the later years, focus on long-term careers.

Such a strategy may receive strong impetus from the Department of Labor's new JTPA regulations, which stress "year-round" programming over discrete, summer-only efforts. P/PV's current development of multiyear curriculum sequences for its STEP program (and extended three- and four-summer versions of STEP) could be built upon to strengthen linkages between schooling and work, while making more strategic use of a large, reliable federal resource.

3. Training in the Growing Service Sector

As youth grow older, and begin looking past work-as-income toward careers and stable jobs, the challenges increase. Rather than supplementing the experiences within the workplace and seeking to better connect them with schools--the emphases for younger youth--older adolescents need help to build bridges between current work experience and long-term opportunity.

Here, one strategy would be to establish formal connections to training and careers in service-sector industries, such as hospitality and tourism. This sector is heavily weighted with "entry-level" jobs and is predicted to experience dramatic growth over the next 10 years (Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education, 1993). Moreover, this industry offers a variety of career paths above the entry level--in maintenance, food service and hotel management--which are characterized by increasing skill, responsibility and salary levels, and are routinely filled by promotion of entry-level employees. More structured use could be made of these ad hoc job connections by sequencing and enriching them.

Another strategy would be to establish local "training centers," which embody many aspects of the "apprenticeship" approach, to further strengthen the transitional potential of entry-level work. Such centers already exist in a few communities, and leaders in the national hospitality community seem interested in establishing more. In our judgment, the appeal of these centers could be greatly strengthened if they were strategically connected to a network of community employers, and used as an incentive to keep youngsters connected and performing well in school while they work productively in a range of naturally occurring jobs.

4. Reverse Commuting

Where career-connected jobs within or near target communities are sparse, there is potential in closing the geographical distance between young workers in inner cities and permanent jobs in more distant locales. "Reverse commute" schemes, which connect urban workers with job opportunities in the suburbs, are a promising try at increasing chances that the income-producing short-term work many young people engage in can pay off in connections to jobs and careers with long-term appeal and payoff. In other work (e.g., Hughes, 1994), P/PV has begun to explore how these approaches could be demonstrated effectively and used to transport older youth from their neighborhoods, which often have few career-connected jobs, to suburban locales, where attractive, better-paying jobs are typically more plentiful.

National Initiatives

At least two complementary approaches warrant serious exploration and development at the national level.

5. Upgrading Training and Supervision in Entry-Level Jobs

One approach would be to help design more developmentally oriented training and supervision practices among nationally known fast food franchises and other high-volume employers of young people, such as national and regional supermarket chains.

The fast food industry has shown commendable interest in launching its own experiments. These provide incentive payments, and in some cases, scholarship funds as a means of retaining young workers, encouraging them to stay in school, and steering them toward continuing education.

We believe these efforts can be effectively built upon and expanded in two ways. First, they can be enhanced and directed toward the attainment of the "youth development" milestones discussed earlier. These enhancements will require--and can attract--national corporate commitment and support for implementation in local settings. However, long-term exploration, planning and concerted negotiation among corporate leaders of these national establishments would be required.

In addition, we believe these efforts would require solid, sustained local support of the kind we sketched earlier. A strong, community-based entity, which serves the needs of both the youth and the participating employers, seems essential if these efforts are to take root and yield the long-term, tangible benefits that would make sense to the "business" perspective of national firms. Pursuing these efforts at both the national and local level is the most promising way of achieving durable changes in the quality of work and support young people experience in many entry-level jobs, and enhancing both their long-term value and appeal to young people.

6. Establishing Certification Programs

A second strategy would be to develop mechanisms to "certify" the competency attainment of young people as they move through sequences of secondary labor market work. The aim here would be to help youth build portfolios, using skills and milestones that are recognized and valued by employers, that can realistically be developed within secondary labor market jobs, and that have developmental significance.

It would be necessary to establish that a young worker has mastered basic educational skills; and useful to establish that he/she has the capacity to think independently and solve problems. We believe it would also be valuable and attractive to establish the degree to which young workers take responsibility, manage their own time, work effectively with others, and exhibit integrity and honesty--all milestones that have developmental as well as workplace importance.

For example, the competency structure developed with employer input by the SCANS Commission (which spans the competencies cited above) could be tailored to develop "competency ratings" for youth, which might be used across workplaces to document skill attainment. These ratings, derived from nationally developed surveys of employer perspectives, would serve as a standard for documenting what young workers have learned and achieved during early jobs, and would thus ease their transition to training and stable career paths in new occupational areas. While it would require extensive development, field-testing and refinement, a competency rating system could eventually be used widely, with local support, as a means of enhancing young people's transition to the "career stage" of their work lives.

Research Initiatives

The following three research initiatives would complement the strategies already described.

7. Evaluating Current Private Incentive Programs

No efforts are under way to systematically evaluate current initiatives undertaken by the major fast food chains to provide incentives to young workers. These initiatives, a mix of nationally sponsored programs and local efforts sometimes designed with the help of area universities, provide an intriguing blend of features. Casual evidence suggests they are workable and appropriate; however, none have been assessed objectively.

By studying these initiatives, we could swiftly enlarge our base of information about the kinds of approaches that work, the initiatives' limitations and the features that need to be added to improve them. A combination of foundation and corporate support could be developed to undertake this work, which would have both tangible short-term benefits and long-term value.

8. Tracking the Long-Term Effects of Work Experience

A second line of research could focus on the long-term effects of entry-level work experiences on youth. Despite the substantial number of adolescents who hold jobs, and the potentially significant role work experience might play in the development of work-related attitudes and skills, scant attention has been paid to this seemingly critical aspect of adolescent development. We know very little about how actual work experiences affect adolescent perceptions, attitudes and behavior, aside from the frequently cited negative effects that excessive work has on school achievement.

In this line of inquiry, we would seek to discover whether and what social, psychological and economic benefits accrue from early work experiences in the long term. The assumption that work can help build character, discipline, self-esteem and other achievement-related qualities must be subjected to a careful longitudinal investigation. Moreover, a precise delineation of the multiple dimensions of the work experience that accounts for positive and negative effects is needed.

A long-term effort to study the relationship between adolescent development and work experience will suggest new ways to tap the potential of the secondary labor market, and help make it a more productive medium for developing the skills of the nation's youth and leading them to solid, stable places in the work force.

9. Measuring Businesses' Willingness to Adopt Innovative Practices

This study would be designed to analyze the degree to which employers are willing and able substantively to enhance work and supervisory practices, and whether these changes will be effective in promoting positive corporate outcomes.

Changing the workplace is a complex and provocative task. Employers are wary, if not suspicious, of public initiatives that might strain their resources, complicate relationships with employees or affect working conditions. Above all, they view their central responsibility as an economic one.

But as this report has found, many employers are poised to undertake initiatives that focus on young workers, aim to reduce turnover, increase productivity and strengthen school connections. These initiatives signal a willingness to experiment, and to modify the traditional relationship employers have maintained with young entry-level workers.

Thus, the environment seems encouraging. Our reconnaissance work with secondary labor market employers, reinforced by research and assessments of school/business collaborations, leads us to conclude that the private sector can indeed be attracted to participate in novel enterprises; however, there is much yet to be tested.

For example, if we assume that employers must see clearly how an initiative will benefit them, what benefits will serve as motivators? Reduced turnover rates? Improved public relations? Increased productivity? Stated another way, what anticipated level of return will stimulate how much investment? We will need to identify what type and level of incentives motivate appropriate changes in employer behavior. Employers will likely shrink from roles that appear regulation-bound or "paperwork-intensive."

On balance, we believe that growing concerns about the value of traditional work experience in the secondary labor market, the increasing willingness of private employers to undertake new approaches to working with young entry-level employees, and the likely prominence of nationally sponsored initiatives in this area over the next several years create a "window of opportunity" for carefully designed, highly pragmatic initiatives.

However, these initiatives must be judiciously chosen, and directly focused on the "developmental" and "transitional" outcomes discussed earlier. Their implementation must reflect continuing respect for the needs and sensibilities of private-sector employers, to ensure that any demonstrations of these initiatives would build credibility and the basis for long-term change and collaboration.

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APPENDIX A

WORKPLUS CONCEPT STATEMENT

Most programs that aim at alleviating poverty among youth and young adults focus on keeping young people in school, delaying parenting and preparing them for hopefully "good" jobs through job counseling and skills training. These programs serve relatively few young people and, with notable exceptions, have not been particularly successful.

However, millions of young people, disadvantaged and not, find work on their own in the retail and hospitality industries--in entry-level jobs in supermarkets, hotels/motels, retail stores, recreational facilities, and, above all, restaurants--especially fast food restaurants. Such jobs are much maligned. They are often (but not always) part-time, short-term and "contingent" in nature. They generally pay the statutory minimum wage of $4.25 an hour or just above it, and provide minimal or no fringe benefits. The work is criticized as being mindless, asking little in the way of skill or training. All these are seen as reasons for the sector's high turnover--sometimes as much as 400 percent per year, as workers flit from one job to another, frequently with periods of unemployment in between. Moreover, this sector of the labor market is ill-organized and ill-served. Working there is seen as leading nowhere, neither upward within such industries nor up and outward from them. And few institutions serve these industries or their workers.

But research has shown that the negative picture of these industries is exaggerated. Young people do learn useful skills in such jobs (even the jobs that have been intentionally "deskilled"). The problem is that the skills and experiences gained in these jobs are not documented and expressed in ways that reflect credit on young workers and promise value to future employers, who generally hire on the basis of guesses about a young worker's maturity, abilities and responsibility. As for turnover, moving between jobs may not be an altogether bad thing for young workers: trying on different roles and learning from different experiences is one of the tasks of adolescence and young adulthood. Yes, turnover in these sectors is too rapid for many young workers to learn much or assemble solid work histories, and it is often driven by boring work, inept supervisors, and the lack of a clear paths to a desirable future. Still, most firms in these sectors do promote from within, even if haphazardly. And promotional opportunities are rapidly growing: the food service sector alone says it is creating 76,000 new managerial jobs each year--jobs paying $20,000 to $50,000 annually.

Leading employers in these industries are beginning to feel that the characteristics of the work they offer may be inconsistent with their own evolving standards for customer service in today's competitive environment. Indeed, some of them are searching for practical ways of improving these jobs. To Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), this situation offers a strategic opportunity where new structures and enriched experiences can help meet the needs of both employers and young workers.

DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF WORKING IN THE YOUTH LABOR MARKET

What can be done to make working in such jobs a more developmentally effective experience--one that makes young workers more productive and moves them along a career path? This question is seldom asked by schools or other traditional youth-serving programs, which ignore or even disdain both the challenge and opportunity posed by what they often derisively term "the secondary labor market." P/PV, however, has addressed this question by mounting a unique, exploratory demonstration program called WorkPlus.

WorkPlus rests on a central hypothesis about working in such entry-level "kid" jobs that derives from two years of preliminary studies by P/PV. The hypothesis is that the "experience of working" in this sector of the labor market can be significantly enriched in three major ways encompassing: (1) what happens on the job, (2) what happens around the job, and (3) the kinds and sequence of jobs held by young workers. All must combine to give the young worker a sense of being part of a process that will lead to a more attractive future.

(1) On the Job: WorkPlus will introduce two innovations and attempt a third. First, it will document the skills gained in typical youth labor market jobs in a portable "Preliminary National Service Credential" drawn from the occupational standards now emerging in the sector's three major industries. (The standards bodies in the grocery, retail, and hospitality industries have agreed to use WorkPlus as a pilot test of the application of their standards through such a common Credential. Dr. Arnold Packer, an author of the "SCANS"[19] framework of necessary workplace skills who sits on the hospitality standards board, is under contract to P/PV as a key advisor to this effort.) Second, supervisors will be trained in youth development concepts, in supervisory techniques shown to be effective for young workers (such as mentoring and coaching), and in the use of skills documentation and feedback. Third, where and when possible, some jobs will be skill-enriched by adding tasks with high learning potential based on SCANS.

(2) Around the Job: Young workers will attend regular off-the-job workshops at a "WorkPlus Training and Support Center" where they will receive individualized case management, career guidance, supplemental education, life-skills training, peer support, and other services, including the opportunity to reflect on and integrate school- and work-based experiences. All will be encouraged to complete or continue their educations.

(3) A Developmental Sequence of Jobs: Both employers and youth employment program operators have long observed that it is difficult to hold many young people in either jobs or employment programs for more than six months. WorkPlus will build on the natural tendency of young people to explore and job-hop by structuring a developmental sequence of jobs, rotating many participants after several months to another job, with the same or another

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[19] "SCANS" stands for the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, appointed by the Secretary of Labor to define a framework of generic skills needed for success in the workplaces of today and the future. Its 1991 and 1992 reports have been widely disseminated and its recommendations have informed both the educational and occupational standards movements of recent years.

employer, that will offer different experiences and the chance to build credentials for additional skills. This is particularly important in these industries where entry-level jobs (even if somewhat enriched) will still be developmentally limited.

Young workers will receive this mix of services until they drop out of the program; are promoted to or placed in "primary labor market" jobs with higher pay, decent benefits and career potential; or enter two- or four-year postsecondary education that can lead to such jobs.

For the purpose of testing this hypothesis in the field, we also postulate certain operating requirements:

(1) A Local Coordinating Agent (LCA): An LCA will be responsible for operating the program in each site. The agent will provide (or contract for) the around-the-job services described above (including a "WorkPlus Training and Support Center" or equivalent), organize an employer consortium, establish linkages with schools and other sources of postsecondary education and training, and case manage the young workers, including maintaining members' files and portfolios and facilitating their progression through a developmental job sequence. Some LCAs will be employer organizations, some youth-serving nonprofits, some school systems.

(2) An Employer Consortium: The LCA will organize, service and maintain a WorkPlus Employer Consortium of local youth-employing businesses, which will agree to provide the WorkPlus on-the-job elements, including supervisory training. A consortium is important to provide a variety and volume of work experiences for young people and to attain the proposed project scale. First-line supervisors and/or managers from consortium workplaces will meet periodically in employer workshops to plan and coordinate WorkPlus and to receive training and other supervisory support services.

(3) Strong Linkages to Education and Training: For young workers to move into primary labor market careers, either within youth-employing industries or elsewhere, they must complete their secondary education and consider postsecondary education as both important and feasible for them. The LCA will both counsel young workers on such prospects and facilitate their continued education and/or training. To these ends, it will establish and maintain close alliances with secondary and postsecondary educational institutions. (As stated earlier, WorkPlus will be run by school systems in some sites, and will work closely with schools in all cases.)

(4) Multiple Sites: WorkPlus will be mounted in seven sites across the country. This will allow us to test different kinds of LCAs with different approaches in different labor markets.

(5) Scale: A large project scale is important so that a Service Credential has a reach that maximizes its value to both employers and workers--and so that workers have a broad range of job-sequencing opportunities. WorkPlus will seek to become large enough and well-known

enough in each site to be a factor that must be considered in the decisions of both employers and workers in the youth labor market.

(6) Benefits to Both Employers and Employees: Employers have told us they will participate for the bottom-line benefits of lower turnover, higher-quality customer service, and higher productivity. Industry leaders say they also hope to develop human resource practices that can build and sustain more competitive work forces and high-performance organizations. Workers will see that they are no longer haphazardly job-hopping, but are in a process that clearly takes them toward a brighter future--a process with more engaging, skill-building jobs; a portable credential that is recognized both locally and industrywide; a series of jobs that explores career possibilities; a more tangible potential for promotion with present employers; and eventual placement in primary labor market jobs or further postsecondary education.

Ideally, WorkPlus will proceed over seven years, driven by the aforementioned hypothesis and operating requirements and by research needs. The first year, during which P/PV completed its developmental work, ended in Fall 1994. At the end of 1994, we began a three-year pilot test of WorkPlus. This start-up effort is of modest scale--eight to 12 employers, 50 to 100 workers in each city. It centers on developing and honing the on-the-job, around-the-job, and job-sequencing tools. In the third year of the pilot phase, we will attempt a substantial expansion of both employer and worker participation. If this pilot phase is successful, we will then continue to a final two years of steady-state operation, followed by a year to pull together the research.

WHAT WORKPLUS IS--AND IS NOT

In essence, WorkPlus is not a placement program; it is an employee program. In most instances, the LCA will recruit employers, who will designate a shift, section or other group of existing employees and their supervisor(s) to whom WorkPlus services will be offered. This means WorkPlus is not means-tested; we will offer the program's services to whatever mix of employees we find at the participating worksites. (In most cases, however, the LCAs we choose will serve at-risk communities and will seek to enroll in the consortium those employers who hire from such communities.) Thus, WorkPlus is not a classic demonstration program in which individuals are randomly assigned to control and treatment groups; this would not be possible using existing cohorts of employees. Instead, WorkPlus is an exploration in which the core elements of the hypothesis will evolve and be developed through experience in each site.

To be sure, while WorkPlus is not a mainly a placement program, two kinds of placement will in fact occur. First, in at least two sites, we intend WorkPlus to be school-based and center on a school-to-work program under which students would be placed in such jobs as part of a transition from school to primary labor market careers in these or other industries. Second, in a number of instances, the LCA will prepare and place young people from the streets in WorkPlus jobs--generally as replacement workers for those who drop out or are promoted out of the program.)

In sum, WorkPlus is neither a pure school-to-work program, a pure work force development program, nor a pure job placement program, but rather a hybrid of all three--and more. WorkPlus has certain unusual attributes, some with potentially important strategic leverage:

- Unlike almost all youth development programs, WorkPlus seeks significant change on the job. It stresses "work-based learning" as well as outside supportive services.

- Unlike almost all youth development programs, WorkPlus will work directly with private-sector supervisors to improve their ability to foster the development of their subordinates.

- WorkPlus does this in the maligned and ignored secondary labor market, where massive numbers of young people now work, where over one-third of the adult work force had their first jobs, and where important aspects of an individual's work ethic and skills can be deeply influenced, positively or negatively.

- WorkPlus tests approaches to structuring this significant element of the often chaotic youth labor market, cobbling together pathways and supports that can lead young people up and out of low-paying, dead-end jobs (even while it attempts to enrich such jobs to the extent feasible).

- WorkPlus involves the potential development of a new employer institution in the youth labor market, in the school-to-work movement, and in general work force development. Its most important legacy could be the Employer Consortium.

- Finally, in real workplaces, WorkPlus tests whether the emerging occupational skills standards can be helpful in documenting skills, guiding training, and forming the basis of a portable Certificate.

WHERE WORKPLUS STANDS AND WHAT IS NEEDED

WorkPlus has completed its first developmental year and has begun field implementation. Three sites commenced operation in the early winter of 1994-95: in Boston, there is a partnership between the Private Industry Council and Action for Boston Community Development; Cleveland Works, a nonprofit youth-serving agency, runs WorkPlus in that Ohio city; and New Ways Workers, a school-serving employment broker operates the program in rural Sonoma County, California. Employers in these three sites who have thus far expressed interest or agreed to participate include local units of Marriott (a hotel and a unit of its Food Services Division), Wendy's, Host International, Bradlees, Stop & Shop, Au Bon Pain, CVS Drugs, Star Markets, Safeway, Baskin Robbins, McDonald's, Burger King and Taco Bell. Seven other locales have been screened and invited to submit proposals to operate WorkPlus; from them we shall select and start the final four sites during the first half of 1995.

P/PV has received a $3 million grant for WorkPlus from the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and another three-quarters of a million dollars from other sources. We are currently approaching foundations and the federal government for the balance of the approximately $3.5 to $4.0 million that will be required for the three-year pilot phase of the project (starting up and going to scale). A number of foundations have expressed interest in contributing to this pilot phase. We will seek funding for a steady-state operating phase on assessing the effectiveness of the pilot phase.

RESEARCHING THE LESSONS OF WORKPLUS

WorkPlus is a novel, complex intervention that will require a series of interrelated studies to yield lessons along a number of dimensions. A comprehensive agenda of research activities will span the life of the demonstration, shifting in nature and emphasis as the project matures through its stages.

During the start-up of the three year pilot stage, we will be concerned with organizing and organizational issues. We will investigate the extent to which the LCA can recruit competing employers into a consortium, build that consortium into an effective entity, help employers adapt occupational standards, and mount the services young employees will need. Questions include: what strategies will these parties employ, and what factors will facilitate or constrain their use? Once under way, we will document and analyze how, why, and to what degree employers participate and change their practices. Toward the end of this phase, we will examine some of the early benefits that accrue to participating employers.

In the latter portion of the pilot stage, when sites are attempting to attain large scale, we will continue many of the earlier studies, adding an examination of the factors and strategies that are most effective in recruiting large numbers of new employers and of the operational issues of involving them at greater volume and scale. In particular, we will want to test the value of scale. Does WorkPlus become more attractive at scale to youth and employers? Is the Preliminary National Service Credential more useful to employers--and employees--with more employers involved in the consortium? Can we establish Credential consistency within and across sites? Do job-sequencing options become enriched? What is the volume of sequencing within versus across employers and what factors affect this?

Finally, if the three-year pilot proves sufficiently successful and we continue on to another two years of steady-state operation, we will take a deeper look into how WorkPlus affects the career trajectories of participating employees in terms of their outlook and attitude, their education and career aspirations, and their work accomplishments. Improvements along these dimensions should provide interim evidence of the long-term effects of participation. These assessment studies, which include analysis of employer benefits, will be the major work of this final stage of WorkPlus.

The results of the studies undertaken in all phases of WorkPlus will be distributed broadly within industry, education, and employment and training communities. If WorkPlus is successful, we expect the industries involved to promote such practices widely.

INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYERS AND WORKPLUS:

BENEFITS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WorkPlus is an unusual demonstration in that it is heavily concerned with employers and with what goes on at worksites: the demonstration aims to help employers develop more productive human resource practices and to improve the competencies and performance of young workers. The role of individual employers is therefore of central importance to the demonstration.

BENEFITS

This demonstration is designed to test the central hypothesis that WorkPlus will result in participating employers' realizing some combination and degree of the following benefits:

- Access to a pool of job-ready candidates to fill vacancies.
- Training and other support services designed to help supervisors in managing young workers and to advance in their own careers.
- Reduced turnover.
- External support for WorkPlus employees that includes case management, career guidance, life-skills training, and access to supplemental education and social services.
- Employees better prepared for internal promotion (e.g., more punctual, more customer-service oriented, better team players.)
- Recognition for participating in a national demonstration project formally supported by three national industry associations (hospitality, retail and grocery).
- The opportunity to use and pilot test the occupational standards emerging from these national industry associations.
- Reinforced reputations as "forward thinking" employers.
- Access to skill assessment and certification tools and other products of the demonstration.
- Copies of WorkPlus research reports.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The role and responsibilities of individual employers consist of certain steps and activities that are displayed on the attached flow chart. While these activities will undoubtedly evolve over time and may differ in detail from site to site and employer to employer, they will in general include the following:

1. Joining a consortium of local employers who agree, in writing, to accept the further responsibilities outlined below.

2. Participating in a locally defined policy advisory body to the WorkPlus local coordinating agency (LCA). This body may be composed of relatively senior employer representatives and may convene for perhaps four meetings of two hours duration during the first year.

3. Designating a specific worksite or sites for participation in WorkPlus, as well as specific supervisor(s) or other site-level leadership.

4. Considering job-ready candidates referred by the LCA for vacancies as they exist or develop.

5. Attending a series of initial planning meetings with other consortium members to help define the WorkPlus demonstration. These meetings will be attended by a mix of representatives from designated WorkPlus worksites (mainly front-line supervisors but perhaps also including mid- and/or upper management). They will be held at a time and place convenient to the participants. (Subject to local decision, such planning meetings will probably number two to four over a period of a month or six weeks, consuming from six to 12 hours.) The purpose of these meetings is to:

   A. Identify the key needs of front-line supervisors that must be met if they are to be more effective leaders and managers and help design supervisor workshops to meet those needs;

   B. Review standards and certification procedures being developed by industry bodies, the local employers' current performance assessment and training procedures, and other supportive materials on these subjects as offered by P/PV and the LCA; then devise the key elements of assessment and certification procedures and worker training to be used in the local WorkPlus worksites;

   C. Where possible and appropriate, plan job enrichment. The timing of this activity will vary among employers.

6. Help the LCA recruit current workers for participation in WorkPlus. Some workers will decide to become "full WorkPlus members" (who will receive the off-job supportive services offered by the LCA); others may decide not to participate as full members (and thus will not receive the off-job supportive services).

7. Allow front-line supervisors to receive a range of supervisory support services. These will include on-site advice and assistance, readings and videos, consultations with corporate trainers, and off-the-job training workshops. The latter will be held during non-work hours, generally away from worksites, though if participants so desire, some can be held at worksites. The number and sequence of such sessions will be determined by the participants. (P/PV suggests an initial, start-up round of one supervisory training workshop per month for four months, followed by bimonthly or quarterly sessions.) Such workshops will be held at times and locations convenient to supervisors, and can include incentives to participate, such as food, honoraria, academic credit, scholarships, and interesting, valuable programs designed to help supervisors advance in their own careers. (The workshops might each last a couple of hours or so, and consume 12 to 24 hours during the first year.)

8. Implement agreed-on performance assessment, skill certification, job enrichment, improved supervision, and worker training at the worksite. (Note: while workers who decline to become full WorkPlus members will not receive the off-job supportive services, all workers, whether full members or not, will benefit from these improved on-the-job practices.)

9. At appropriate intervals and in consultation with the LCA case manager, rotate or promote a WorkPlus member to another job to broaden his/her experience and deepen his/her certified skills. Also, in some circumstances, consider allowing a WorkPlus member to rotate to another employer, with the understanding that a job-ready candidate for hire, from the LCA or another consortium member, will be provided.

Not reflected on the attached chart are two important activities that cross-cut those discussed above:

10. Engage in a continuing relationship with the LCA case manager for participating workers: This will involve periodic communication between the LCA case manager and a supervisor regarding the performance of the worker at work, at school, and in LCA off-site worker training sessions. These discussions would involve reviewing job-performance evaluations, portfolio projects and other certification materials; information about school performance; written career plans of the worker; etc. (Most of these documents will be kept in the portfolio maintained by the LCA.)

11. Allow limited worksite visits by LCA and P/PV staff, and brief, monthly telephone calls from P/PV staff.

The visits will include:

A. Start-up Visit: This will be a half-day visit to become familiar with the worksite and the nature of the work performed. This visit will facilitate the planning process and ensure that all WorkPlus products and technical assistance address employers' needs and experiences. In addition, there will be a visit at about the same time by P/PV researchers for no longer than a half day to collect baseline information about the workplace.

B. Implementation Visits: There will be one visit per month to observe WorkPlus in practice; collect appropriate data, to include the views of supervisors and workers; and provide advice and assistance. Such visits would range from an hour to a half-day in duration.

WORKPLUS WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The WorkPlus Work Force Development System is designed to build the capacity of employers, employees and local coordinating agencies (including schools) to make work more productive for employers and young workers. The System addresses the needs of employers to have a more skilled workforce and young workers to build skills required for promotions and career advancement. Activities and tools for the WorkPlus Work Force Development System will be developed collaboratively with employers, LCAs and other supporting organizations.

The System consists of three core elements: **ON-THE-JOB**, **AROUND-THE-JOB,** and **JOB SEQUENCING**.

I). **ON-THE-JOB** activities enable the WorkPlus employer to support the employees' development while at work. These activities blend naturally with the tasks and requirements of the job. There are three general kinds of on-the job activities: Assessment, Documentation and Certification of Skills; Job Coaching; and Task Enrichment.

1. Assessment, Documentation, and Certification of Skills. This process encompasses skills and competencies young workers need to develop if they are to become productive employees. SCANS is used as a framework for categorizing these skills and competencies. Processes and forms for assessing, documenting and certifying will be generated with employers' help and will draw from existing performance and appraisal systems and emerging national occupational standards.

A ***WorkPlus Portfolio*** will be created and maintained for each WorkPlus employee to help sites track their progress. The major components of the ***Portfolio*** are a *Development Plan and Checklist*, *Work Samples, Resume*, and a *Preliminary Service Certificate*.

The *Development Plan* is maintained by the LCA and is used to record the worker's strengths, needs, career goals, and interests. The Plan also suggests a general course of action for the employee. It is reviewed periodically and modified as the worker progresses. The *Checklist* documents skills developed by workers throughout their participation in WorkPlus. Information on the *Checklist* comes from employees, employers and case managers and stems from three sources: emerging industry standards, local tasks and performance criteria, and the SCANS framework.

As the employee makes progress, selected *Work Samples* that demonstrate growth and improvement are placed in the *Portfolio*. The *Work Samples* and information from the *Plan* and *Checklist* then form the basis of a *WorkPlus Resume*. The worker can use this resume during interviews to pursue other related employment or education. The *Portfolio* is updated regularly by the employer and employee through communications with a case manager.

A *Service Certificate* summarizes the occupational tasks and skills that a worker has completed and developed through participation in WorkPlus. It is awarded at intervals during the worker's participation. The standard tasks represented on the *Certificate* come from national industry efforts to define competency in different occupational clusters. The certificate, with back up *Checklists* and *Work Samples*, will be useful in helping future employers judge the skills and experience of WorkPlus employees who change jobs through WorkPlus job sequencing.

2). **Job Coaching**. Supervisors will build teaching relationships with young workers that help them perform better at work. In building these relationships, supervisors will expand the on-the-job training that they routinely do by enabling young workers to practice and apply new skills.

3). **Task Enrichment.** When possible, supervisors will add responsibilities to job tasks to help workers grow and acquire competencies. Supervisors will be trained to capitalize on natural opportunities to build skills of employees during the work day, thus, improving workplace performance.

II). AROUND-THE-JOB activities for WorkPlus employers and employees occur off the job site and include: *Supervisor Training Sessions*, *Employee Sessions*, *Support Activities*, and *Portfolio Management*. We envision *Center(s) of Learning* for these activities to take place. The *Centers* provide a location(s) for all the around-the-job activities to occur in a thoughtful and structured manner.

1). **Supervisor Training Sessions** are organized to meet the needs of supervisors, but supervisors must gain an understanding of WorkPlus and familiarity with youth development issues, and must build their ability to communicate with young people, develop job skills through coaching and mentoring, and enrich work tasks. Each of these five areas is covered in a core session lasting about two hours. Other training topics are selected by supervisors according to their group's needs. Each LCA will design formats, select topics and make arrangements for the *Workshops* with input from the supervisors. Supervisors are encouraged to attend all five core sessions; incentives for attending, such as course credit or stipends, will be organized through the LCA.

2). **Employee Sessions** are regularly scheduled meetings for all WorkPlus employees. The sessions give employees time to think about work, discuss how it is going, what problems they are having, and how to work out those problems. Each session covers a specific topic, but there is also time for discussion of general WorkPlus issues. A case manager or instructor uses these sessions and site observations to learn about worker issues and may schedule additional workshops on those issues and/or assign individual support activities. Locations of the workshops may vary to accommodate transportation needs.

3). **Support Activities** are provided to individual participants according to the needs and career goals identified on their *WorkPlus Development Plan and Checklist*. These activities are provided to prepare workers for success in WorkPlus and in life. Tutoring, counseling, mentoring, career guidance, access to postsecondary education, life skills development and employability preparation are examples of support activities that may be offered for employees off the job. These services can be provided individually or in groups and are brokered by a case manager, who is responsible for monitoring the worker's development.

4). **Portfolio Management** is a process for tracking the development of the worker. The employee, supervisor and case manager decide together what should go in the employee's *Portfolio* to document worker progress. The documents are the basis of discussions to determine whether the worker is making adequate progress and adjusting plans and activities as needed.

Maintenance of ***WorkPlus Portfolios*** is largely the responsibility of the case managers, but the LCA develops mechanisms for enabling employers and employees to update them routinely. A critical factor in managing the ***Portfolio*** is identifying the worker's readiness to shift job experiences.

III). JOB SEQUENCING. WorkPlus employees may be able to move to progressively more challenging job experiences either with their original employer or with others. We call this "Job Sequencing," which enables the worker to explore different types of jobs while building skills and adding developmentally appropriate experiences through organized job progressions. The case manager works with both the employer and the employee to help them make planned job changes. Thus, employers avoid random, unannounced quitting and benefit from a pool of qualified entry-level employees who move from other jobs; and employees have the opportunity to explore a variety of jobs in an orderly way. Two critical components enable job sequencing to occur:

1). **A Consortium Job Bank.** Employers will cooperatively assemble a bank of jobs appropriate for sequencing. The LCA maintains this information in a data base to match requirements for available jobs with the appropriate WorkPlus employee.

2). **LCA, Employer and Employee Consultations**. To create appropriate job sequences, the case manager reviews individual *WorkPlus Plans* and *Checklists*, consults with a participant to determine their readiness for a new job, identifies an appropriate next job in the job bank and works with the employee to make the change responsibly. Following reassignment, case managers meet with employees and employers to determine whether the job changes fit and an effective transition is being made by the employer and employee. Case managers, employers and employees exchange reports on employee activities, review *Portfolio* entries, and make adjustments in developmental plans as needed.

PRODUCTS AND RESOURCES

In addition to the ***WorkPlus Portfolio***, products and resources that enable the development of **ON-THE-JOB, AROUND-THE-JOB** and **JOB SEQUENCING** activities include a ***WorkPlus Implementation Guide***, ***WorkPlus Resource Packets***, work force development and life skills curricula and other related resources. Products will be assembled cooperatively with WorkPlus sites, and will foster a connected and integrated approach for implementing WorkPlus.

I). The ***WorkPlus Implementation Guide***

The ***Guide*** gives suggestions for carrying out the goals of WorkPlus. It consists of strategies and guidelines for organizing a WorkPlus program from planning to sustainability. Promising practices from WorkPlus sites that have successfully implemented it are also included. Anticipated topics for the ***Implementation Guide*** include:

- Planning for WorkPlus
- Getting Buy-ins from WorkPlus Employers
- Recruiting Employees
- Developing an Employer Consortium
- Organizing WorkPlus Centers of Learning for Employee and Employer Development
- Organizing Supervisor Training Sessions
- Organizing Employee Sessions
- Using SCANS-Based WorkPlus Products
- Case Management--A Key to WorkPlus Success
- Organizing Job Sequencing Activities
- Organizing Support Activities for WorkPlus
- Organizing Career Guidance For WorkPlus
- Linking with Other Organizations and Post Secondary Education
- Developing WorkPlus Sustainability
- Using the WorkPlus Resource Packets

II). The ***WorkPlus Resource Packets*** contain ideas and suggestions to help the LCA conduct employee training activities around the job, work with the employers to simultaneously build skills of employees while improving the productivity of the workplace, and document training activity outcomes for use in workers' portfolios. The ***Packets*** are generic, portable, and based on practical and real situations in the workplace. ***Resource Packets*** are also multidimensional to ensure that activities for employees and employers are integrated with on and off-the-job activities.

Each ***Resource Packet*** includes an INDEX, GOAL STATEMENT AND RATIONALE, SKILL OBJECTIVES, SUGGESTED TRAINING ACTIVITIES, SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES, and RESOURCES.

The INDEX outlines the contents and page numbers of the ***Resource Packet***. A GOAL STATEMENT helps the LCA know the purpose of the packet and what it is designed to achieve. SKILL OBJECTIVES identifies skills the packet covers and indicates the SCANS skills that are addressed. SKILL OBJECTIVES provide the focus for the ***Resource Packet***.

SUGGESTED TRAINING ACTIVITIES include ideas for "hands on" activities that can be used by supervisors on the job, instructors off the job, and employees on or off the job. Activities are designed to promote and increase good work performance. and include direct coaching ideas as well as suggestions for practicing certain skills. They are written for large and small group formats as well as individual instruction. When implemented, these activities provide the content for *Employee Sessions* and ideas for supervisors to help workers apply what they've learned in these sessions to the job. ***Resource Packets*** will be developed for jobs in restaurant, grocer, retail, lodging, and fast food industries. They will also include information on such topics:

- Customer Service
- WorkPlace Communication
- Problem Solving at Work
- Motivation on the Job
- Teamwork

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES provides guidelines for using training activities to assess progress toward development of SCANS related skills. This section offers suggestions for documenting training activity outcomes for use in the portfolio.

RESOURCE information such as appropriate P/PV curricula, materials from other programs, commercially available materials, organizational and expert contacts, and related readings, are included in this section.

III). ***Curricula***

Curricula from P/PV are available to WorkPlus sites for use in Employee Workshops or during other types of employee support activities. Work Matters, Work Learning (PECE), and Summer Internships are particularly relevant for WorkPlus.

- Work Matters is an in-school and out-of-school curriculum to help youth make a successful transition from school to work. All of the lessons in Work Matters are appropriate for the Employee Workshops.

- Work Learning (PECE) is a motivational learning model for integrating work/service and learning by drawing on the learner's values, needs and experiences. This curriculum is useful in building teamwork and life skills.

- Summer Internships is a curriculum that helps students prepare for the workplace, try out skills, learn new ones, and understand what it takes to be successful in the world of work. It can be used in WorkPlus as a model for organizing workshops where employees identify and solve work-related problems.

The LCA and employers also bring their own local curricula to the WorkPlus project. Site curricula will be shared, when feasible, during WorkPlus planning meetings and conferences and included in the ***Resource Packets*** if appropriate.

IV). ***Other Resources***

Employers have training plans and manuals, evaluation tools, and performance standards and criteria which will be used as resources for developing WorkPlus materials.

Other organizations and agencies also have materials which may be of value to WorkPlus sites. Products from the Center on Education and Training for Employment; from the American Society for Training and Development; LearningPlus; computer based learning strategies from ETS, or Worklink, a database for compiling student records that can be used by employers for hiring are examples of resources that will be compiled and annotated in the ***WorkPlus Resource Packets***.

APPENDIX B

THE SECRETARY'S COMMISSION ON ACHIEVING NECESSARY SKILLS (SCANS)[1]

Both academic and occupational skill standards have been central to recent recommendations for reforms in education and training. The Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce brought the issue to the fore when they recommended in their 1990 report *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*, that certificates of mastery be developed based on benchmarks of skill and academic performance.

In 1990, the Secretary of Labor appointed the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) to determine what skills are needed to succeed in the workplace, the acceptable levels of proficiency, and the most effective means of measuring these skills. Composed of representatives from education, business, labor and state government, the Commission made several recommendations for how schools and workplaces could be reorganized to foster work-based learning and prepare students for work in the 21st century. The SCANS Commission was chaired by former Labor Secretary William Brock. He had served as co-chair of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, sponsored by the National Center on Education and the Economy. Although no formal mention was made of the connection between these two commissions, it appears evident that SCANS sought to define the skills that would constitute the "Certificate of Initial Mastery." A Certificate of Initial Mastery would certify that the bearer was qualified in all basic skills needed to work in the modern workplace and was prepared to pursue either a college-prep curriculum or one leading to a "Certificate of Mastery" in a specific skill or technical area. Thus, SCANS set out to define a generic framework of workplace skills needed for success in the workplaces of the present and near future, and which would serve to integrate thinking and action in the home, community, school, workplace and government.

The Commission convened from 1990 to 1992.[2] In *What Work Requires of Schools* (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991), it identified a three-part foundation of skills and five work competencies needed by high-performance work organizations. The foundation skills consist of reading, writing, arithmetic, listening and speaking, but also include thinking skills and personal qualities, such as self-control.

The work competencies (commonly referred to as "Workplace Know-How") are defined as the ability to use resources, work with others, acquire and use information, understand

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[1] The best history of the SCANS Commission can be found in *SCANS: ROADMAP To The Future*, a report based on a series of articles written by Dale Hudelson that appeared in *Vocational Education Weekly* over a three-year period from 1990 to 1992, published by the American Vocational Association.

[2] With the issuance of its final reports in 1993, the SCANS Commission dissolved.

complex systems and work with a variety of technologies. (A complete list of these competencies and foundation skills appears in Exhibit 1.)

Over the past couple of years, labor market observers have confirmed that what employers appear to want now are transferable "soft" skills, such as the ability to communicate, use technology and manage information. These are comparable to the competencies identified by SCANS. It is likely that significant resources will be required to effect and sustain the level of pedagogical innovation genuine implementation of a SCANS-based curriculum appears to imply.

ASSESSMENT

The major difference anticipated between standardized tests (like the SAT or the AP Exam) and the SCANS assessment leading to a Certificate of Initial Mastery, was that the latter would not be a discrete "test" or event. Rather, the Commissioners agreed, students should be able to work toward the credential over time, with clear milestones of achievement along the way, thus permitting all students to attain a meaningful proficiency standard, though some may reach the goal faster than others.

The vice president of The Educational Testing Service (ETS), stressed the need for research on work-related skills and how to test for them, since "very little is known" about this topic, with practically no research on how to document or assess these skills. However, no mention was made in the final report of whether SCANS skills should be assessed within existing assessment mechanisms (i.e., NAEP) or there should be a distinct SCANS assessment. Unanswered in either case is who or what should develop it.

In a recent report for the National Assessment Governing Board, the executive director of ETS's Center for the Assessment of Educational Progress, stated that "Despite numerous complexities, it would be possible for NAEP to directly assess SCANS and other workplace competencies. NAEP could use its consensus process, making sure that employers were well-represented, to develop a framework for a work-readiness assessment,and conduct such an assessment, much as it does in reading and writing."

In this connection, attention is called to Performing a National Job Analysis Study (American College Testing Service, 1993) a study describing assessment measures for identifying job competencies and skills that are common across occupations. The study can be expanded to provide skill standards readily comparable from occupation to occupation, profiles of generalized work requirements for specific occupations, a common lexicon for describing requirements across occupations, and empirical information for classifying occupations and testing various classification models.

EXHIBIT 1
WORKPLACE KNOW-HOW

The know-how identified by SCANS is made up of five workplace competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities needed for solid job performance. These are:

WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES--Effective workers can productively use:

- **Resources**--They know how to identify, organize, plan and allocate time, money, materials, space, and staff.
- **Interpersonal skills**--They can work well with others on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate, and interact well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- **Information**--They can acquire, evaluate and use data, organize and maintain files, interpret and communicate, and use computers to process information.
- **Systems**--They understand social, organizational and technological systems and operate effectively with them; they can monitor and correct performance; and they can design or improve systems.
- **Technology**--They can select a variety equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks, and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

FOUNDATION SKILLS--Competent workers in the high-performance workplace need:

- **Basic Skills**--They are functional in the areas of reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking, and listening.
- **Thinking Skills**--They have the ability to learn, to reason, to think creatively, to make decisions, and to solve problems.
- **Personal Qualities**--They exhibit individual responsibility, self-esteem and self-management, sociability, and integrity.

SUMMARY

One architect and proponent of the SCANS framework advances the proposition that successful preparation of the workforce depends on our ability to achieve four interrelated milestones. First, we must come to an understanding that work and school are becoming more alike. This in turn should lead to a vision of a common "learning and earning" system. Third, we need to create a partnership of programs and institutions that produces much more learning and much higher earnings. Finally, to make sure all parties involved are speaking the same language, we need to come to consensus on a common lexicon to describe knowledge and skills. (See Packer, 1993.)

On various fronts, progress has been made toward these goals. First, as this report has pointed out, more and more influential analysts and education observers (e.g., Hoyt, Packer, Bailey and Merritt) have drawn parallels between the classroom and the workplace. Likewise, the vision of a common learning and earning system is embedded in the School to Work Opportunities Act. Indeed, all four of the legislation's guiding principles call for the creation of system infrastructures and connecting activities that integrate the worlds of school and work for all students.

An important step in this direction has been taken by the National Governors' Association (NGA), which has convened a School-To-Work Roundtable this year to focus on expanding the private sector's role in the design, governance and operation of state school-to-work systems.

Finally, skill standards explicate the critical linkages between school-based knowledge and workplace know-how. Headway is being made toward developing a common language through the skill standards projects (Chapter IV) and the creation of the National Skill Standards Board by the Goals 2000: Educate America Act passed in 1994. SCANS has provided a framework for much of this process.

SCANS PUBLICATIONS

Available from the Government Printing Office (GPO), by using the attached order form or calling (202) 783-3238 (see form for prices):

- Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance (Part I). This section from SCANS' final report outlines the Commission's recommendations for achieving high-performance schools and workplaces. (30 pp.)

- Learning a Living: A Blueprint for High Performance. This is the full final report. To the Part I recommendations, it adds suggestions for implementation. (87pp.)

- Teaching the SCANS Competencies. This presents six articles to guide education and training practitioners as they apply SCANS concepts in classrooms and workplaces. (125 pp.)

Available from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS):

- What Work Requires of Schools. SCANS' first report, the 60-page document defines the skills and competencies workforce entrants and members need in order to be effective in the workplace. Single copies are available for $19.50, plus $4 for handling, from: NTIS, Operations division, springfield, VA 22151, (703) 487-4650, NTIS number: PB92-146711.

- Skills and Tasks for Jobs. This 523-page report shows the relationship between SCANS-defined skills and 50 common occupations. Single copies are available from NTIS for $52, plus $6 for handling.

Available from the US Department of Labor:

- SCANS Blueprint for Action: Building Community Coalitions. This is a 64-page national roundup of schools and workplaces that put SCANS principles into practice. It is available free, in single copies and until supplies are exhausted, from: ETA Dissemination Unit, US Department of Labor, Room N5637, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210, (202) 219-7664.

See also:

SCANS: Roadmap to the Future. Summary of the Interim and final reports of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, with background analysis. A Vocational Education Weekly booklet, published by the American Vocational Association and compiled by Dale Hudelson.

Packer, Arnold H.
1993 "Earning and Learning: Major Links to Better Living," HR Magazine, April: 51-54.

Packer, Arnold H.
1992 "Taking Action on the SCANS Report," in Educational Leadership, March.

Second to None, a videotape on SCANS, available from the National Audiovisual Center, 8700 Edgeworth Drive, Capitol Heights, MD, 20743-3701. (301) 763-1850.

★ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1995 – 387 - 217

This project was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration under contract No. 99-0-1879-75-053-01. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. government.

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